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*The African Violet Magazine*

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MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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Published by the African Violet Society of America, Inc.

# The African Violet Magazine

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Published By

The African Violet Society  
of America, Inc.

Vol. 2 No. 1

## Staff

Alma Wright, Editor  
4030 McCalla Ave. Knoxville 15, Tenn.

Mary Parker, Co-Editor  
Harrill Hills, Knoxville 18, Tenn.

## Assistant Editors

Elsie Freed  
C. J. Hudson, Jr.  
Boyce M. Edens  
Arthur Chard

## News Reporters

Maxine Wangberg, Warren Gottshall,  
Harriet F. Lawton, Regina Gottshall.

The Editor says: Your cooperation will be most appreciated if when writing to the members of the magazine staff you enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

If you have any unusual or interesting experiences in growing Saintpaulias may we invite you to write an article for publication in an early issue of this magazine?

Mr. Boyce Edens will notify you when your membership fee is due. Notification has been mailed out to those members whose membership expired with the 4th issue of this magazine.

The Society does not necessarily endorse or guarantee the advertising appearing in this magazine. The policy of the magazine is to accept advertising from recognized growers and business firms wishing to advertise their products in this publication. Advertising rates are \$3.00 per column inch.

The African Violet magazine is published quarterly by the African Violet Society of America, Incorporated and is entered as second class matter at the post-office Knoxville, Tennessee under the act of March 3, 1879.

## Officers

Mrs. O. E. Keller, President  
1223 E. Oak Park  
Des Moines 16, Iowa

Mrs. O. M. Coleman, 1st V. Pres.  
1231 Druid Pl., N. E.,  
Atlanta, Ga.

Mr. J. W. Good, 2nd V. Pres.  
Springfield, Ohio

Mrs. Robt. O. Wright  
Recording Secretary  
4030 McCalla Ave.  
Knoxville 15, Tenn.

Mrs. Frank Pochurek  
14225 McCracken Rd.

Mr. Boyce M. Edens, Treasurer  
2694 Lenox Rd. N. E.  
Atlanta, Ga.

## COVER DESIGN: DU PONT SEEDLING

Photo by Ross Hahn

A beautiful du Pont Violet blossom and bud from an unnamed seedling of the du Pont variety is our cover design for Volume II Number I.

The ruffled blossom has good texture and form, and is a most distinctive bi-color in shades of lavender and pink. A flat growing plant with extra heavy, rounded, hairy leaves of a medium green, completes the description of this handsome violet.

## A Handbook for African Violet Growers.

Thru an oversight credit was not given to Mary Margaret Odom's book, "A Handbook for African Violet Growers", for Mrs. George Pendleton's interesting article, "African Violets As I Grow Them".



# The President's Message

## Local African Violet Societies

Eighteen local African Violet Societies that we know of have sprung up and are flourishing in fourteen different states, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, Battle Creek, Michigan, Birmingham, Alabama, Cincinnati, Ohio, Dayton, Ohio, Des Moines, Iowa, Flint, Michigan, Greenville, South Carolina, Huntington, West Virginia, Knoxville, Tennessee, Los Angeles, California, Memphis, Tennessee, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Omaha Nebraska, Richmond, Indiana, Springfield, Missouri, Springfield, Pennsylvania and Washington, D. C. The state of Tennessee leads with three local societies; Michigan is next with two; and the other states and the District of Columbia have one each.

That is the count at present, but we are confident there are others we have not heard from or that may have been overlooked in the count. First off we say to these other societies, "We want to hear from you." Will you send me the names and addresses of all the officers of your societies? We recognize that this is the first and somewhat limited roll call of local African Violet Societies, but we very much want to make our records complete and thus to properly record every local society.

To all local societies now in operation, and to those still in process of organization, we send assurance of our sincere interest in your activities. We desire to make this interest manifest by doing everything we reasonably can to assist each local society in its activities. We are equally concerned with stimulating the organization of a local African Violet Society in every community that does not now have one and that really wants one. Smaller communities may not have but one local society, but in the larger communities there may be several, just as there are several garden clubs. The local African Violet society may be a part or department of a local garden club, or it may be separate and distinct in its organization.

The Second Annual Convention of the membership of African Violet Society of America, assembled recently in Cincinnati, Ohio, voted unanimously to . . . "Encourage the organization of a local Africa Violet Society in different sections of the United States. These local societies shall be entirely autonomous with regard to their form of organization, management and operation". These are the exact words of an amendment to the Society's by-laws, and they say to all who are interested locally everywhere to organize and operate African Violet Societies in their respective communities along such lines as will best meet local needs and desires. In offering this amendment to the By-Laws, the officers and members of African Violet Society of America were unanimous in the desire that local societies shall be independent in the development of their local organizations and have them just as they wish them to be.

This amendment further assures that all members of a local African Violet Society may, upon payment of only \$2.50 annual dues, become individual members of African Violet Society of America; and thereby entitled to enjoy all benefits and privileges of such membership, which include the splendid quarterly Magazine published by the Society. This concession enables the local society to retain 50¢ of the annual membership dues of its members who are also members of the National Society. At this rate every member of a local African Violet Society should also be a member of African Violet Society of America.

How best may we further help your local African Violet Society in its operation and development? Please do write me as fully as you wish in answer to this question. Your suggestions and your wishes will mean much to us in shaping the Society's future course of helpfulness to its entire membership.

Cordially,

Your President,

Mrs. O. E. Kellar

# Convention Highlights

By Inquisitive

Ho! THE SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION. One hundred and one members of African Violet Society of America checked in at the registration desk of the Second Annual Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, May 21 - 22. The program started with an interesting bang and ended that way too. Yes — sir, and mam — members of the Society flocked in from fifty-seven different cities. Almost every state east of the Rockies was represented. Everyone voted it the best Convention ever attended and a good time was had by all. You'll read much more about it elsewhere in this issue but, being the inquisitive kind, I just have the feeling that I should try to put a reflector back of a few of the Convention highlights, so to speak, in an effort to get them into more conspicuous focus for those who did not attend.

**TRIBUTE WHERE TRIBUTE IS DUE.** One just must call names in a matter of this kind in order to pay proper tribute. First off, then, a thundering applause goes to the Convention's Official Hostess and Host, Myrtle and Arthur Radtke of Cincinnati. And I really mean it! Mrs. Radtke made all local arrangements

and carried them out beautifully in putting the Convention on. Arthur Radtke, through his well-known hospitality, made it possible for as many of the member delegates as desired to do so to stop at the famous Cincinnati Club, and all events of the Convention program were staged there. Mrs. Theresa Moeller, one of the Cincinnati members, looked after the efficient registration of the member delegates, and Boyce Edens, down in Atlanta, Georgia — the African Violet center — looked after essential pre-convention planning and arranging the program events.

**MR. AND MRS.** Don't just think that African Violet interest is confined to the gentler sex. Ten different 'Mr. and Mrs.' attended this Convention together and not a cross word (that I heard) was had regarding which of the African Violet plants in the extensive Exhibit is the finest. Eight other men, all enthusiastic violet fans, were also there. It was just about as much of a man's Convention as it was a woman's. Would you believe it?

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### NEW VARIETIES FROM CROSSES.

There was nothing highbrow about the Convention program. It was pitched on a level of good old fashioned, every-day understanding, and that's what I especially liked about it. The opening meeting on Friday morning was devoted entirely to a symposium on Propagation of African Violets through the Processes of Hybridization and seeding. William E. Merkel of Mentor, Ohio, originator of African Violet varieties Mentor Boy, Bi-color and Red Head, was discussion leader of this meeting. Taking part with Mr. Merkel were Henry Peterson of Cincinnati, Ohio, Mrs. Ruth Yoars of Bunker Hill, Indiana, Mr. Frank Tinari, Bethayres, Pennsylvania, Mr. R. G. Baxter and Mrs. Mead, Youngstown, Ohio, Mr. Paul Slough of Springfield, Ohio, and Mrs. Jennie Spoutz of Detroit, Mich. Finally, practically everyone of the member delegates attending this meeting fired questions right and left without hesitation. The discussion by Mr. Merkel brought out how the three varieties mentioned above were produced by hybridization, and gave rise to the general conclusion that many more new and splendid varieties can be developed through these processes in the future. The discussion of such an interesting topic suggested that everyone present, if they desired to do so, could make planned crosses, plant the resulting seeds, enjoy the raising of their very own seedling plants, and probably hit the jack pot by originating an outstanding new variety.

Mr. Merkel said, "The fact cannot be over emphasized that the breeder should know what constitutes a good variety, he should be critical of his seedlings, and he should not hesitate to discard varieties that do not measure up. In looking at the seedlings one must get away from the idea that 'there is no child like my child.' As I see it there are only two valid reasons for putting a new variety on the market. . . it either should be a definite improvement in some respect over the sorts of the same color that are in commerce at present, or it should be entirely different from present existing varieties. A seedling must not only look good it must actually be good."

### NEW VARIETIES EXHIBITED.

Twenty outstanding growers of African Violets, both professional and amateur, were invited to exhibit their new and not-so-well-known varieties during the Convention. A number of professional (commercial) growers and a few amateurs responded to this invitation. One of the exhibit rooms of the Club was almost full of plants entered by the exhibitors.

J. A. Peterson & Son of Cincinnati, Ohio exhibited splendid specimen of Supremes of the varieties Amethyst, Lavender Lady, Norseman and Sailor Boy. These were mutants or variations of these well-known varieties.

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## Convention Highlights

Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pennsylvania exhibited their new varieties, both mutants of the duPont strain, Blue Flute and Orchid Flute.

C. Merkel & Sons Company of Mentor, Ohio exhibited a number of their excellent new varieties. Some were named and some un-named and, as I understand it, all are well-grown seedlings. Blue and violet tones predominated among these seedlings.

Ulery Greenhouses of Springfield, Ohio exhibited a number of their new ones that were tops. Some of these were mutants of the well-known variety Blue Girl. Among the plants they exhibited was a Blue Girl sport done in an orchid tone. There was also a fine light blue that was not a Blue Girl sport apparently, and different from any of the light blues I have seen. I do not have in my notes or memory the names of any of these fine things from Ulery.

John Good, Good and Reese, Springfield, Ohio, exhibited several of his new and different colored duPonts that we have been hearing so much about. These fine new things will add materially to the already sizable number of duPont seedlings and mutants. I do not recall that any of Mr. Good's new ones bore names, but everybody in 'Violetdom' is waiting for him to build up a sufficient stock of these new duPonts in order to get them into early distribution.

In fact, we all are waiting for all of the new varieties exhibited at the Convention to be distributed through proper channels to all of the eager and enthusiastic violet fans throughout the Country.

**WHICH ARE THE BEST ONES?** The Exhibit of the new varieties I have briefly high lighted was strictly non-competitive. No prizes were offered or given. Neither were there any official judges, as in a competitive show, to chase everyone out of the room and commence judging plants according to a scoring chart. I was glad that this was so because it encouraged everyone to look them over leisurely, with note book in hand, and say to himself, 'which are the best ones?' I do not know which ones anyone else picked as the best because I did not compare notes with them. But there were three varieties that I liked best. Here they are in the order given. Frank Tinari's Blue Flute is the best light

blue of the duPont strain I have yet seen, Henry Peterson's Supreme Norseman, an exquisite medium light blue, with the characteristic thick foliage and large bloom. Ulery's excellent light blue exhibited by Mr. Slough. I just must have these three bloom for me in my collection. Yum!

**THE FACE OF NATURE**, as portrayed in the finely-carved speech of Helen Van Pelt Wilson on this timely subject, lifted everyone at the Friday evening dinner meeting to higher levels of interest and enthusiasm. Miss Wilson was the Convention' guest of honor, attractive, charming and gracious her talk was full of rich personal experiences. She gave many interesting stories and quotations on the value of the love of flowers in achieving peace of mind and in the making of a fuller and happier life. Miss Wilson inspired those present with a deep sense of gratitude for the many friends they have made thru an interest in this fine plant, and a desire to share with others the joy and pleasure of their African Violets.

**THAT GREENHOUSE LOOK.** It is an intriguing sight to view long rows of benches in greenhouses, laden to overflowing with colorful African Violet plants, so well-grown. Well, the trip many of us were privileged to take to J. A. Peterson & Son's fine greenhouse set-up on the last afternoon of the Convention was a fitting note on which to end it. We had seen the fine array of plants of Norseman, Admiral, Blue Number 32, Lavender Lady, Neptune and others, that composed such tasteful table decorations at the various meetings of the Convention, and had wondered from whence they came. Here at Peterson's we saw them blooming by the thousands, and knew then that Henry Peterson had provided them. You can believe this inquisitive visitor to Peterson's that Friday afternoon, they really do have the plants for the wholesale trade they serve exclusively.

**NEXT YEAR'S CONVENTION IS GOING TO BE HELD IN CINCINNATI!** Everyone get ready to come. It will be held, no doubt, during either next February or March (1949). The exact dates will be published in the next issue of the Magazine. That gives everyone plenty of time in which to groom the very finest plants of new varieties of African Violets to enter in the non-competitive exhibit that will undoubtedly be one of the interesting events of next year's Convention.



## The Secretary Reports

On May 22 the Second Annual business meeting was called to order with 46 members present.

Several changes in the Constitution and By-Laws as to the duties of the various officers were acted upon, and it was recommended that they be published in full in a future issue of the magazine.

Article IX. Local Chapters was changed to read as follows:

### Article IX Local Societies

1. This society shall encourage the organization of local African Violet Societies, that may be known by such name or other names, in different sections of the United States and other countries. These local Societies shall be entirely autonomous in regard to their form of organization, management and operation. They shall be encouraged in the holding of regular periodical meetings of their members for the discussion and consideration of the propagation, growing and orderly exhibition of African Violets through the medium of local or regional exhvovits and shows.

2. The members of such local Societies may become individual or sustaining members of this Society and are thereby entitled to enjoy the rights, benefits and privileges of such memberships in this Society.

3. The annual dues of the members of all local Societies shall be as prescribed in Article IV of these by-laws.



NEW OFFICERS

Left to right Mrs. Wangberg, Mrs. Radtke, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Pochurek, Mr. Edens, Mr. Merkel.

An operating budget of \$3,000 for the calendar year was decided upon, and Mr. Boyce M. Edens treasurers report was accepted and authorized published in the magazine. Mr. Edens report is as follows:

### Financial Statement

#### For The Period

October 1, 1947 to April 30, 1948

Balance In Treasury  
September 30, 1947 ..... \$1,160.22

## Income

Membership Dues .....	\$1,846.20
Receipts from 1947 Violet Show ..	1,299.00
Registration Fees 1947 Convention ..	379.00
Sale of Advertising	
Space in Magazine .....	61.10
Sale of Back Issues of Magazine ....	11.00
Total Income .....	\$3,596.30

## Expenditures

1947 Violet Show .....	\$1,193.22
1947 Convention .....	94.03
1948 Convention .....	61.59
Postage .....	88.16
Stationery and Printing .....	116.12
Telephone and Telegrams .....	37.09
Publishing and Mailing Magazine ..	624.14
Miscellaneous .....	67.02
Total Expenditures .....	\$2,281.37

## Balance in Treasury

April 30, 1948 ..... \$2,475.15

It was recommended that the editor of the magazine be permitted to spend up to \$500.00 per copy for the printing and mailing out of the magazine.

Mrs. Kellar announced that Mrs. Arthur Radtke had extended an invitation to the Society to meet again in Cincinnati in 1949. Applause and enthusiasm of those present indicated unanimous consent. Mrs. Kellar appointed Mrs. Radtke as General Chairman for the 1949 Convention.

Tribute was paid to Mr. W. D. Holley and the members of the classification committee for their splendid work on the classification of the older varieties of Saint-paulias. Mrs. Kellar announced that those members of the committee present had met, and accepted the report at a meeting May 21. In retiring the committee the president expressed her thanks and appreciation and that of the Society for their faithful service.

On recommendation of the Board of Directors the Society voted to set up a Registration Committee similar to that of the American Iris and Peony Society.

Following this came the election of officers. New officers for the coming Season are:

President, Mrs. Robert Wright,  
4030 McCalla Ave. Knoxville, Tennessee  
1st V. Pres., Mrs. Arthur Radtke  
3334 Orion, Cincinnati  
2nd V. Pres. Mr. William Merkel  
1238 Maple Street, Mentor, Ohio  
Secretary, Mrs. Martin Wangberg  
1920 West 3rd Street, Perry, Iowa  
Corres. Sec., Mrs. Frank Pochurek  
14225 McCracken Road, Cleveland, Ohio  
Treasurer, Mr. Boyce M. Edens  
2694 Lenox Road, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia

# First Report of the Classification Committee of the African Violet Society of America, Inc.

February 25, 1949

Recognizing that there are far too many varieties and that there are many varieties in the trade under several names, we have set up the following descriptions. Some of the varieties described differ very little from others. In a few instances it has been possible to say that certain varieties are so nearly alike that we refer them to the first named of that description.

Some of the difficulties which were encountered by the committee and which should be recognized in using these descriptions are:

1. The plant habit is effected by whether it is growing to a single crown or a multiple crown.
2. Leaf coloring is effected by light, soil fertility, temperature, pH of the soil and perhaps other factors.
3. Leaf size and length of petiole is effected especially by amount of light the plant receives.
4. Color of flowers is effected by just as many and probably the same factors as is color of leaf. Besides this, different persons in comparing the color of a flower to a color chart will arrive at different color classifications.
5. African violet varieties sport so freely that it is easily possible to produce several different plants from one mother plant, if minor differences are considered enough to separate them.

We have tried to avoid discussing the relative merits of varieties. How a variety compares to the others which it may closely resemble will be determined when it comes up against them in show competition. Since there are so many varieties, they should be judged in the same class if they are very similar. In this way the inferior varieties will gradually lose favor among growers.

Other descriptions will be added as they are completed. Many amendments will be necessary from time to time as we realize this list of descriptions is far from errorless. In many cases time has not permitted us to get all the details we would like to have had. We have tried to do our best in the time we have had and we humbly submit the following descriptive list.

Mrs. Pat Crowe, Rossville, Georgia  
Mrs. Alta H. Decker, Cayuta, N. Y.  
Mrs. W. R. Estes, Buellton, Calif.  
Mrs. J. W. Freed, Feasterville, Penna.  
Mrs. O. E. Kellar, Des Moines, Iowa  
Mrs. Wm. J. Kiser, Birmingham, Ala  
Mrs. Z. C. Layson, Maysville, Ky.

Mrs. W. H. Odom, DeWitt, Iowa  
Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Cleveland, Ohio  
Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Mrs. Karl Schoew, Huntington, W. Va.  
Mrs. Frank Tinari, Bethayres, Penna.  
Miss Fay Wilcox, New Bedford, Penna.  
Mrs. Robert Wright, Knoxville, Tenn.  
W. D. Holley, Cromwell, Conn., Chairman

## Admiral

The medium sized plant is flat. Young leaves are deep green, growing lighter in color with age. The leaves are hairy, slightly quilted and cupped downward, measuring about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ". The petiole is light green, lightly flushed with purple, growing to about 3" long. The leaf is ovate with slightly cordate base and an almost smooth margin. Flowers are  $1\frac{1}{8}$ " in diameter, in clusters of 3-5, produced very freely just at the top of foliage. Color V. 1.

Amazon Blue (See Blue Boy Supreme)

## Amazon Pink

Originated as a sport of Pink Beauty. The variety is very similar to Blue Boy Supreme except that the flowers are pink. The large plant is compact and upright yet droopy. The main crown is almost always branched. The leaves are dull medium green, fluted, very hairy, slightly quilted, and thickened. The margins of the leaves are evenly crenate and distinctly cupped downward, although cupped less on older leaves. Leaves are round to ovate measuring  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " or slightly larger at maturity. Petioles are thick and heavy and grow to about 3" long. Young petioles are flushed deep purple which carries into the main veins. Old petioles are light green. Flowers are sparse, 2-3 in a cluster, to 2" in diameter and produced above the foliage.

## Amethyst

Also has been called Light Orchid, Orchid Beauty and Orchid Lady. The large plant is upright. The leaves are medium green tinged with purple on back of leaf. The leaves are ovate, glossy, slightly quilted, cupped upward, with toothed or dentate edge. Mature leaves measure about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by 3". The petioles are rosy tinged to  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " in length. Flowers are  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter, in clusters of 4-6, produced freely just at top of foliage. Color is R. V. 4 top petals and R. V. 5 bottom petals.

## Bicolor

Also called Red Bicolor. The medium sized plant is upright when young but has a tendency to flatten out as it matures. Leaves are medium green, pointed, ovate-

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dentate, hairy and slightly quilted. Mature leaves measure approximately 2½ by 2¾". Petioles on mature leaves about 3¼", medium green flushed with red. Flowers are distinctly bicolored with two top petals medium orchid tipped wine red and lower three petals light orchid. Flowers are about 1½ by 1½", produced freely in clusters of 2-5, on long stems well above the foliage. Flower color V. R. 5 and V. R. 6.

## Blue Bird

The plant is very upright and very large. The leaf blade is almost a perfect heart shape, deep yellow green to dark green, flushed brilliant red on the back, with deeper red veins. Even the young leaf usually has a flushed red back. The coloring of the leaf is very pronounced. The surface is slightly hairy, medium glossy, and cupped downward. Mature leaves measure about 2¾ by 3". The petiole is long to 5", flushed deep red on mature leaves. Flowers average about 1½", across and are produced just at top of foliage in clusters of 4-6 at a medium rate. Color V. B. 3.

## Blue Boy

The first really fine commercial African violet. The compact plant is upright. Young leaves are more or less cordate but older leaves are ovate with entire or smooth margins. Leaves are medium green with petioles and main veins flushed wine. In the young leaves only. Young to middle aged leaves are evenly crenate, cordate at base, pointed at tip and usually cupped downward at edges. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 3". Young petioles are flushed deep wine; old leaves are light green. Petioles grow to about 3½" long. Flowers 1¼ to 1½ in diameter are produced in clusters of 3-7, very freely and well above the foliage. Color B. V. 1.

## Blue Boy Improved

A sport of Blue Boy with longer and larger foliage and slightly larger flowers. The same general leaf description. This includes a number of sports, none of which are exactly alike so the variety is too difficult to attempt to describe. Not to be confused with Blue Boy Supreme, which has round, thick, foliage.

## Blue Boy Supreme

Originated as a sport of Blue Boy. The large plant is compact. Considerable variation is encountered in this variety since it was originated in several different places. The generally accepted description is as follows: Young leaves are dull medium green with veins and petioles flushed wine. Old leaves are slightly deeper green with light green petioles. The fluted

leaves are very hairy, slightly quilted and thickened. The margins of the leaves are evenly crenate and distinctly cupped downward almost all around. Leaves are usually round (about 2¼ to 2¾" in diameter), but sometimes they are slightly longer than wide. Petioles are thick and heavy and grow to about 3" or longer. Flowers are sparse, 2-3 in cluster, 1¼ to 2" in diameter and produced above the foliage. Color in strong light B. V. 1.

## Blue Darling (See Blue Boy)

## Blue Eyes

The large plant grows flat. Young leaves are smooth and whitish green and straight. Older leaves become flushed red with dark veins and a deep cupping. Mature leaves are smooth, glossy and cupped upward, growing to about 2½ by 3". Petioles vary from light green to deep reddish-purple and grow to about 4". Three to seven small (1-1½") flowers are produced rather freely and well above foliage. Color B. V. 5 to B. V. 6.

## Blue Girl

Originated as a sport of Blue Boy. The large plant has a compact, upright habit. Leaves are cordate with deeply crenate edges. The leaves are medium green, darker near the edges and with a light yellow-green spot where the petiole joins the leaf blade. The round (about 2¾" in diameter) leaves are slightly hairy. Young petioles are flushed purple, old ones are green with pinkish veins on top. Mature petioles measure up to about 4". Large flowers (1½ to 2") are produced very freely in clusters of 3-5, well above the foliage. Color in strong light B. V. 1. It has many variations as to leaf pattern such as Curley Special and Old Lace.

## Blue Girl Supreme

Very similar if not identical to Amazon Blue Girl. The very large plant grows flat. The coloring of the leaf is the same as that of Blue Girl. The young leaves are very cupped while mature leaves are flat. The leaves are very thick, very hairy and very fluted. The margins of the leaves are deeply crenate. Mature leaves measure up to 3" in diameter. Petioles are large and thick, up to 3" long and veined deep wine. Flowers are 1¼ to 2¼". Color in strong light B. V. 1.

## Blue Treasure

Formerly called Blue No. 3. Origin is unknown. The large plant is upright, growing much like Ionantha. Mature leaf is dark green, quilted, hairy, glossy and ovate with evenly crenate edges. The

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young leaf is lighter green. Mature leaves grow to about 2½ by 3". The pinkish to light-red petioles are extremely long to 9 or 10". Medium sized (to about 1½") flowers are produced very freely in clusters of 9-13, well above the foliage. Flower color is V. 2. The tiny veins in leaf are quite red and plainly netted.

Blush Beauty (See Blushing Maiden)

Blushing Lady (See Blushing Maiden)  
Also same for Blush.

Blushing Maiden

The large plant is upright. The young leaf is dark green with flushed veins beneath. The mature leaf is somewhat lighter green without coloring in the veins. Young leaves are cordate at base with crenate margins. Old leaves are finely hairy, ovate with pointed tip, but with almost smooth margins. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 2½". Petiole is flushed wine-red in young leaves; little or no coloring in old leaves. Petioles grow to about 4" long. Flowers about 1½" in diameter are produced very freely in clusters of up to 7-8, well above the foliage on stems that are flushed winered. Color is white overlaid with blush pink, covered by Fischers Chart.

Commander (See Commodore)

Commodore

The large plant grows in a flat, tight rosette with outer leaves drooping slightly. Young leaves are very cordate, dark green and wine beneath. Mature leaves are very dark green with raised areas darker. Mature leaves are broadly ovate, glossy, extremely quilted, cordate and cupped upward slightly at the base. Mature leaves measure to 2½ by 3¾", being usually longer than the petioles. The petioles have a slight purplish flush in two distinct lines. Flowers are about 1½" in diameter, in clusters of 7-8, produced freely just at top of foliage. There is a tendency to drop flowers early but this is offset by prolific blooming habit. Color V. 1.

Crinkles

The medium sized plant is flat. Young leaves are medium to dark green. Mature leaves are very dark with a brilliant wine-red back. The ovate leaves are slightly hairy, glossy, quilted and very evenly crenate. Mature leaves attain the size of 2½ by 3¾". Petioles up to 5" long are flushed lightly to deeply wine-red. The older the leaf the darker the petioles. Flowers are in clusters of 3-10, 1-1½" in diameter, produced rather freely and well above the foliage. The foliage margins and the intense color of the undersides of leaves are points of distinction. Color V. B. 4.

Dainty Maid

Originated as a sport of pink Beauty. This plant has Pink Beauty flowers and White Lady foliage. Originally called Pink Lady. The medium sized plant grows in a droopy, tight rosette. The leaves are pale to medium green, with the young leaves only having veins which are flushed wine-red. The leaves are distinctly cordate, finely hairy and cupped downward. Mature leaves measure about 2½ by 3". The short petiole to 2½" is colorless except on the youngest leaves. The flowers may be produced in clusters up to 12 with the first flower opening in the cluster extremely large for the variety. Normal flowers measure 1½-1¾" with width slightly greater than depth. Petals are somewhat more pointed than the average variety. Flowers are produced freely and well above the foliage. Color between V. R. 6 and R. 6.

Dickson's Purple (See Commodore)

duPont Lavender Pink

Also listed as duPont Pink. Plant has a droopy habit of growth. Leaves are unusually large, medium green, hairy and evenly scalloped along the margins. The underside of leaf is usually pale green but occasionally there is a rosy tinge. Leaves are round and fluted, measuring up to 3" or more in diameter. Petioles are thick and may or may not be flushed lightly purple. Flowers are sparse but large and delicately colored a true orchid with deeper lavender around the outer edge of the petals and in the very center of the flower. A trace of darker coloring extends outward from center of flower toward ends of petals. Color R. V. 6.

duPont Blue

Foliage and habit of growth similar to duPont Lavender Pink. Color of flower B. 3.

Double Blue Boy, Double Duchess, Double Russian & Silver Wings are similar varieties

Originated probably as a sport of Blue Boy. The plant is large and upright. Leaves are dull medium green with prominent red veins underneath on mature leaves. Young leaves sometimes have reddish veins underneath. The ovate, hairy leaves measure about 2 by 3" when mature. Petioles grow to about 4" and are flushed wine-red on mature plants. Flowers are full double with 10-18 or more petals. They are usually sterile. Flowers are produced down in the foliage, very freely in clusters of 6-10. When fully open they measure ¾-1¼. Color B. V. 3.

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Frieda

The very large plant grows in a flat, tight rosette. Leaves are dark green. On older leaves there is a light vein through center. The very smooth leaves are glossy, slightly quilted, cupped upward with almost smooth margins. The backs of leaves are dark red. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 3". Petioles are light green on mature leaves, red on young leaves, and grow to 6" long. Flowers are small to 1" in diameter, 4-6 in a cluster, produced freely just at the top of the foliage. Flowers are velvety. Color R. V. 1. & 2.

Gorgeous

The plant is large and upright. The leaves are very much spooned with the tops deep green and the undersides light green. Leaf surfaces are hairy and glossy, mature leaves measuring about 2 by 3". Petioles on mature leaves grow to 5" and are pale pink. Sometimes a tinge of pink shows beneath the leaves. The flowers are produced very freely, well above the foliage, in clusters of 3-5. They average 1½" in diameter and are distinctly bicolored. Color of 3-5. They average 1½" in Color of top petals V. 2.; bottom petals V. 4.

Ionantha

The original species brought into cultivation. It now is somewhat improved and varies to some extent as it has been grown from seed in many instances. The generally accepted description for the variety under this name is as follows: The plant is very large, upright yet the lower leaves are droopy. The young leaf is dark green to quite red at times. The mature leaf is dark green, glossy, quilted, has slightly serrated margin, a cordate base and is cupped upward slightly. Mature leaves measure 2½ by 3½". The petioles grow very long to 7" and may or may not be flushed wine. Flowers are about 1½" in diameter, 3-8 in a cluster, are produced very freely just at the top of the foliage. Color V. 5.

A continuation of this report will be published in the next issue of the magazine. Mr. H. G. Harvey uses rotating system in fertilizing his African Violets.

1st Week: Vitamin B-1

2nd Week: Superphosphate - ¼ teaspoon to 1 quart water.

3rd Week: Vitamin B-1

4th Week: Hyponex - ¼ teaspoon to 1 quart water.

ACID VERSUS LIMESTONE SOIL

Phyllis Ferrall

My husband makes a great deal of sport of my hobby, but down deep, he is proud of my African Violets and shows them off to all of his friends. About a year ago I was having a bit of trouble with my tiny plants dying slow deaths. I experimented with different soil mixtures, but all seemed too acid. Healthy babies soon became sickly little waifs. My husband had been reading a great deal about the natural habitat of the African Violet, and he suggested, as long as they grow wild in their natural state in a limestone area why not use limestone in our soil.

I use Alma Wrights chick feeder method a great deal. And as long as we had just had some new limestone drives put in, I promptly put a generous layer of the stone in the bottom of each feeder, and placed the small pots on this bed. When watering I use very hot water, and these babies love the steam. After a year of experimenting I am completely sold on this method. The little plants are so healthy and bloom when very small:

When some of the anemic babies, raised under my old system get to looking too ill, I put them in the limestone trays, and in just a little while they look healthy and robust.

I have some of my larger blooming plants in these trays also and they are truly gorgeous. I have Bi-color that has bloomed constantly since last November and three weeks ago had 84 blooms on it. I have a very small Amethyst with 61 blooms and Blush has stalks of 7 and 9 blooms the size of silver dollars. So my friends, I am convinced our Violets do not do as well in acid soil as they do in sweet soil.

I have tried so many things people have told me, many times to my sorrow but I know some can have success with certain methods that others fail with completely. I firmly believe we should use a very large dose of horse-sense, a lot of love, and a little prayer with our precious Saintpaulias. I don't believe in the green thumb fallacy. I also feed once each week with sheep tea, and I am richly repaid with many gorgeous blooms.

My recipe for sheep manure tea is most simple and easy to use. Place a large handful of commercial sheep manure in a quart jar. Cover with boiling water and let stand for 24 hours before using. enough of this sheep tea is added to the warm water the violets are watered with to color it no darker than the color of weak ice tea. Never use full strength on plants as it will burn the roots.

Feasterville, Pennsylvania  
August 25, 1948

Dear Club Members,

I wish to take this opportunity of acknowledging the many kind messages contained on your courtesy cards. Tho' a few members did neglect to post notification — I shall be expecting their co-operation in the future. The honor of being our fastest traveling Pigeon on this "Conductress" flight went to Unit 24, directed by Eleanor May of Ardmore, Pa. I would also like to announce that material is solicited to help in the compiling of a second semi-annual Conductress Pigeon and it must be ready to fly soon.

Next, is an unpleasant topic — a rumor of a Cyclamen Mite epidemic. I am very sympathetic because several years ago I, too, experienced this catastrophe. However, it did teach me the value of ISOLATION. I gladly now accept the motto: "It is better to be safe than sorry", and as each new leaf or plant is added to my collection, it is completely isolated for a two month period. I formed the habit of caring for these violets last; never allow the watering spout to touch the foliage or pot; and wash my hands immediately when finished. Visitors should also be discouraged from handling flowers. I attribute my cure to the immersing of plants in a pail of water, kept at 110° F. for 15 minutes. All the while stirring gently and avoid the leaves from touching the sides of a metal container. I highly recommend this method, if done with accuracy — but a thermometer is essential. The treated plants should then be shielded from even direct light for several days and before replacing the posy again in the desired location, all articles that came into contact with the plant while it was infested should be disinfected. I used Lysol. To all ailing plants — I DO wish you a speedy recovery!

I am told, that this Fall — both the Life and Woman's Day Magazines will each present an article on the subject of African Violets with colored illustrations. At this time, I do not know the date of publication. We are all familiar with the Life, but some of us may not have heard of the Woman's Day, sold only at the A & P Food Stores (5¢ per copy; back numbers available by sending 10¢ for each desired copy). The author of the latter article, will be the well known Helen Van Pelt Wilson.

Now — I am going to repeat a few hints that have come my way. They all sound logical, but as conditions do vary — I advise those wanting to experiment, will use but a few plants of their most common variety first, as guinea pigs.



## The Homing Pigeon

Esther Schadewald (Unit 23) reports that by dissolving 2 tablespoons of lime to 1 qt. of water (let stand 3 days) and then water with this mixture, will destroy soil pests.

Florence Sallade (Unit 21) shares with us her latest favorite soil mixture, which is as follows: "I rake fallen leaves in the same spot every year and the soil is black and loose. This can be scooped up with the hands, and then I add a good measure of dry, rotted cow manure, a little sand and ashes (but no peat moss). After my plants are potted, I continue to fertilize by using a week manure tea and rain water.

Esther Schadewald (Unit 23) reports members of Unit 4) have made worthy contributions in the form of suggesting saucers. Ethel uses plastic dishes that can be purchased in the 5 and 10¢ stores in assorted colors (price .05¢ each). While Arthur has been using, for some time, Clay Pigeons. These are obtainable at sport stores, in a quantity of 135 for only \$2. They are made of a combination of clay and pitch, coated black and are attractive. Of course, they are fragile, but if treated with care are satisfactory for small potted plants. Both of these, light weight containers, are adapted for glass shelves.

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Carolyn Rector (Unit 14) sends in this excerpt. "In this section of the city (San Pedro, Calif.) most of our homes are heated with portable open gas heaters. A method which produces a very dry atmosphere, thus causing buds to blast. A pan of water on the heater did not help. Spraying with warm water twice daily was of little benefit. Not until I put the pots in a metal window box surrounded by 3 inches of wet sand did I get blossoms. The addition of a few drops of Clorox to the water with which the sand is dampened, prevents mold". I am also deeply grateful to Carolyn for the name of Mrs. W. R. Estes: Buellton, California, who sells leaves. This should be a welcome and convenient source for our western friends, aiding them in enlarging their collection.

Trusting that I may be hearing from you

Sincerely yours,  
Elsie C. Freed (Conductress)

#### Naturalized African Violet Show in Chattanooga, Tennessee

One of the highlights of the Tennessee State Flower Show held in Chattanooga, Tennessee on April 24 and 25 was the non-competitive and educational African Violet display staged by the African Violet Society of Chattanooga. Mrs. W. W. Cox, president of the society served as general chairman.

The display was a large area woodland scene arranged in the shape of the map of Africa with a high cliff and a rock bound pool measuring 12 by 6 feet. A handsome Bi-color Violet on which had alighted a yellow butterfly floated on the surface of the pool. Flowing out of the side of the cliff was a stream which formed a beautiful waterfall. Here light blue violets grew in the moss covered ground, and in the crevices and niches of the rocks near the pool, and beside the waterfall. Low ferns grew near the waters edge and among the rocks. The stream continued on from the waterfall and wound its way around the foot of a hill formed of flat rocks, and on between two violet covered banks which sloped upward, and terminated in another cliff at the far right corner of the map or garden. To the left of the waterfall was a large moss - covered mound about 15 by 25 feet in area on which the violets were naturalized in a solid bed creating a hill side of violets. At the top were Blushing maidens. Next Pink Beauties then plants in several shades of orchid graduating into deep purple and blue at the base of the mound. At the right of the waterfall was a smaller mound covered with Pink violets growing in among the rocks and ferns and in front

of this was an old root stump in which gay Red Heads bloomed. Close by the stump was a fallen tree having ferns and violets growing beside it. A sunken garden filled with many varieties of the choicest plants in the display occupied the large space of level ground in front of the moss - covered mounds, cliffs and pool. Pine trees and tall ferns were used in making up the background, and the outline of the map or garden was formed by a low irregular rock wall covered with ivy and having moss and ferns growing around it.



Mr. Roberts

#### Import from Africa

Mr. Evan Paul Roberts, East Lansing, Michigan has been fortunate in securing in Africa and importing into this country on April 14, 1948 representative plants of three new species of African Violets. They are *Saintpaulia diplotricha*, *Saintpaulia orbicularis* and *Saintpaulia tonguensis*. At the same time three new varieties, Gatten Purple, Gatten Blue and *Saintpaulia lonantha*, dark form was secured.

Mr. Roberts has been doing a great deal of work on *Saintpaulias* during the past several years, and hopes to have plants of these new species and new varieties ready for distribution some time next year. He has promised pictures and to write an article for the magazine on these new African Violets in the near future so that the members of the society may have the opportunity of acquainting themselves with these rare plants.

There are only a few species of African Violets probably only nine, while there are over a hundred varieties of Violets.

Editors Note: Please note that species are different from varieties, thus the information of new and original species violets from their native land may foreshadow the development of some new and different varieties. Some day perhaps, elusive yellow violet may be a reality as other species violets are made available and work on the hybridizing of *Saintpaulias* is expanded.

# *A Report of the Growers Exhibit of African Violets at The Convention in Cincinnati, May 21-22*

Jean Crowe



Of all the nice things promised at the Convention in Cincinnati I believe the Growers Exhibit was the one most anticipated, and the most eagerly sought out and poured over by all present. Not all the plants were new of course, but the majority of us were delighted to see so many whose names were familiar and the plants in bloom brought a new thrill, seen for the first time. Some were able to put names to hitherto unidentified plants in their collection, while others found to their sorrow that they did not have the true variety.

Due to the confusion in names, there are even among the most reliable of growers, some plants still going under more than one alias. However all the firms with whom I have come in contact are exceedingly anxious to have their plants correctly named, and will do so just as quickly as the names are standardized by the African Violet Society.

It is impossible to describe all the plants at the exhibit, not only because the near by Growers had quite large displays, but because many plants were not yet named. However lets stroll among the tables and note the comments of the crowd.

Here is the display from Merkel & Son in Mentor, Ohio. Many of these are not yet named, are only numbered. All are splendid specimens. There are many favorable comments on the new Winifred Merkel, named I hear after Mr. Bill Merkel's mother. another one attracting attention is called Giant Blue. There is

no doubt that we can in future look to those who gave us Mentor Boy, for many more outstanding plants.

J. A. Peterson of Cincinnati not only had a large exhibit of plants, but he generously donated many fine specimens of these to be used as beautiful decorations on the luncheon tables, where they were much admired. His display I think was outstanding because it contained authentic examples of all the original Armacost & Royston's introductions, about which there is so much confusion. These original plants are Admiral, Blue Boy, Commodore, Mermaid, Neptune

Norseman, No. 32, Sailor Boy, Viking and the original and true Amethyst, contrary to popular belief is lavender pink and often miscalled Orchid Beauty. Admiral too is causing much comment since few of us have the original type, also No. 32 which is still rather rare, and the much talked about Frieda.

The Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pa. had a nice exhibit to come so far. Many are admiring the Blue and Orchid Flutes, of the duPont family and the Double Russian which is very fine. Now we stroll into the other room. Here we find from Good & Reese of Springfield, Ohio several fine specimens of the duPont plants obtained from Mrs. W. K. duPont. Everyone comments on the beautiful foliage these plants have. Silver Pink is the only one of this color, the blues vary from No. 1, the darkest to No. 5, the lightest blue. Many note the size of the flowers, some with frilled edges.

Ulery's plants, also from Springfield, Ohio are clean, healthy and beautiful, mostly familiar varieties though Blue Eyes and Tinted Lady are much admired, both are very pale blue's. Ulery's as well as Merkels have some very fine seedlings coming on, and we expect many new and fine plants from them at a later date.

Mrs. Jennie Spoutz flew in from Detroit, Mich. with some sample seedling's, but of much more interest is her promise

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of a Pink as well as Blue Basket type African Violet in the future.

Yours House Plant Nursery of Bunker Hill, Ind. had among several promising plants, Rosalie and Red Beauty, both much admired.

All in all the exhibits were well worth while not only for the fine plants the grower's are now producing, but for the interest they are taking, and the work they are doing to develop better plants in size, color and foliage, which holds great promise for the future of the African Violet in America.

## Some Causes of Bud Drop

Harriet F. Lawton

There are numerous causes of bud drop on the Saintpaulia, a few of which I have run across during my eight or nine years of their culture. These are: Gas, dry air or lack of humidity due to furnace heat and, improper soil. Let's take these in the order of their importance.

1. Gas: either caused by gas heater, gas range or gas furnace or other gas appliance. The leak of gas may be so little as to be imperceptible to the human. If a great amount of gas is in the air, the foliage will be affected, leaves will curl and become an unhealthy green, with underside of foliage even taking on a red or purplish cast in the veining in varieties not usually having such a color. Buds turn a deep purple, (almost a black) and drop before opening. Have any gas appliance checked by the gas company for leaks. Often one will allow the gas to be turned on so as to escape before lighting, or a faulty pilot light may cause a leak. In my own case we could detect a gas odor from the furnace. The gas company was summoned and found six or seven bad leaks in the pipes leading from the furnace. These were sealed. One test for detecting gas is by the use of a fresh carnation. If gas is present, the flower will curl up and "go to sleep". If there are no gas leaks in evidence, make sure the equipment is kept clean so far as the pipes and burners are concerned. Coal gas can also be injurious. If all these points have been considered and buds still drop, then go on to the next step. Gas does not always make the growing of house plants impossible although it bears serious consideration.

2. Dry or low humidity due to furnace heat: Having sufficient moisture for

plants is vital. This can be accomplished in various ways, such as through steam caused by cooking, if plants are in a room adjacent to the kitchen or having radiator pans either attached to the radiator or bowls sitting on top of the radiator with water kept in them at all times. I do not feel however, in an extremely dry house, that one of these in a room affords sufficient moisture. The more plants one has in a room, the greater the humidity. If porous pots are used, there is much evaporation through the walls of the pots. The moisture is taken up into the air. One of the best methods of increasing humidity however, is through watering by the Constant Water-Level. (for directions on this consult this magazine, Vol. 1, No. 2) Through this method of watering there is a constant aura of moisture about plants at all times. The humidity of the surrounding air will vary somewhat with the existing outside humidity as recorded from day to day.

3. Soil: Type of soil is important. This last but by no means least, has come to my attention only recently. One group of plants was continuing to have bud drop for no apparent reason. Each step was done according to Hoyle. The soil was a rich, black, fibrous loam purchased from a local greenhouse, considered the best for the purpose. Finally an analysis was made of this soil as well as one from another source, by our State Experiment Station. The black loam tested PH 6.2, too acid for the Saintpaulia. And, it ran too high in Nitrogen content or soluble salts, meaning that it had been too heavily fertilized. I was advised that this can cause bud drop. Planted in this mixture, the tops of the plants were very healthy but the roots too small for the size of the plant. The other sample of soil which was tested, tested a PH 6.9 nearer to neutral. I was advised to change my plants to the less acid soil and with the lower nitrogen content. This I did and they have responded beautifully. Large blossoms, more rapid growth and a quantity of buds is the result. It may seem strange to consider soil last, but unless one can be sure of no gas leaks and unless the air can be made fairly humid, the chances of raising flowering plants would be slim. So, unless you are sure of your soil, consult your State Experiment Station, have an analysis made and seek their advice. This service is free for the asking. Merely testing soil for acidity or alkalinity is not sufficient, as too much or too little of any given element can cause trouble. Your State College will then advise you what to add to your soil in order to give your plants a balanced diet.

# Violet Adventuring

Mrs. Guy Sutton

I've had such a grand time with African Violets that perhaps my experience is worth sharing.

Two years ago in August, I had a surplus of iris and offered them, through our newspaper, to any who would come for them. Among those who came was a dear little old "alone" lady. She arranged to come after the iris later and asked if there were any flowers I wanted. Did she have an African Violet? "No", she said, so I thought no more about it. When she returned, she brought me a "hot-house" Blue Boy. THAT was the beginning of the Fever.

Now, I must have a white and a pink! There was an offer in the newspaper in November for exchange, of a pink violet for lily bulbs. To complete the exchange, the owner of the bulbs and I met on a street, each wearing a chrysanthemum for identification. Since then she has become the dearest friend I have, and we share every violet we get.

This Spring this friend and I visited an "African Violet Robin" friend, Mrs. Nora Fonbuena, who wrote an article for the Violet magazine, and saw her 1200 plants. What a gorgeous sight they are! There I first saw, and fell in love with, Blue Eyes. She gave me a rooted Kewensis which now has six babies.

In April Mrs. Fonbuena came to visit me, bringing me a plant that is a sport of Bi-color, but not enough different to name. For growing and bloom it surpasses even Blue Boy.

The "violet fever" now had such a firm hold that I had traded other house plants and "hardy" plants here, there, and everywhere for more leaves. At one time, the postman brought me twenty leaves of as many varieties.

A plan I have tried for rooting leaves which has been very successful is to put vermiculite in a baby food can, with holes punched in the bottom, set in water until saturated, then put leaf stem down in it. The depth I find best is about one and a half inch. At this depth the new plants grow roots of their own instead of the parent leaf having all the roots. I then set it on a shelf in a North window and invert a Mason jar over it. When babies begin to push up, I work the vermiculite back and leave them until they are about one and a half inches tall. I then move vermiculite back more and slip off the babies, leaving the leaf to grow more. I had a leaf that had six babies, then later four, and still later one. At this point the leaf got broken off from the roots

and I repotted it in vermiculite. It now has two babies, making thirteen to date and is still a healthy leaf.

However, it now is not under the jar, because the jar began sweating so much from heat and excess moisture I was afraid to leave it. This method is ideal in Winter, but I have had equally good success setting the cans on sand and keeping it moist for Summer rooting.

In brushing the leaves to remove dust there is danger of scattering "bugs", etc. I take mine to the sink, hold in one hand, and sprinkle with a clothes sprinkler and warm water until the leaves look clean. I prefer evening for this, for then I need not worry about the sun getting on a wet leaf.



Photo by Ross Hahn

There are now fifty-seven named varieties in my collection, but of course, after culling there will be fewer. However, I feel sure of fifty, as they have been checked.

One plant I haven't seen mentioned in any African Violet articles is "Royal Sunset". Last year a friend sent me a leaf. Now, two friends and I each have a large plant from this leaf which is a mass of bloom. It has very dark leaves and the bloom is a shade between Blue Boy and Iolantha. It is also called "Too Purple". Perhaps it is only an older one under a new name, but it gets the Ohs! and Ahs!

A neighbor had a sick bunch of plants and brought them to me. I didn't know what was wrong, but knew Rotenone would kill outside bugs, so I poured some in a dish and made a "sloppy paste", completely covering the leaves. A friend told our nurseryman about them and he said "Cyclamen mite", and that the Rotenone

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would do no good! I now have a good many saved from the batch and not a sign of bugs. That was over a year ago. Now, if my plants get any bug and I can't get "special sprays", I'll try Rotenone, of course isolating them first.

Lest you think I always have perfect success — I waited nine months for a leaf to put up a plant. When it did there was one sickly plant. I nursed it along for another six months and now a bloom has opened. It isn't what it was labeled, but one of which I have dozens! My husband thinks it quite a joke. Well, I can laugh at that, too!

This just merely touches the grand adventures, the many friends, and the real joy my African Violets have brought me. Why so grand? Because — no two plants ever act alike, no two leaves ever send up the same number of babies at the same time, the same variety in the same window is never just the same!

What more could one ask for high adventure and for making friends?



Photo by Ross Hahn

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Brought order out of chaos and gave light  
And gentle warmth from his created sun,  
Looked on His work and found this task  
well done.

And yet I think He must have looked afar  
To some bright planet or a brilliant star  
And dreamed that, in the future, His great  
Plan

Would find a fullness in the works of Man.  
So is it, that in every human heart

Those who love beauty yearn to have a  
part

To make the desert blossom and the bare  
Land bring forth a greater loveliness, to  
share

With God who in His lonely Outer Space  
Dreamed we might have on earth a heav-  
enly place.

Written for and dedicated to  
AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY  
OF AMERICA

Ollie Reeves  
Atlanta, Georgia  
Oct. 9, 1947



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# Midwest African Violet Exhibit

"The First Midwest African Violet Exhibit sponsored by the Omaha African Violet Club, Inc., was held in the Craft Room at Joslyn Memorial, Dodge and 22nd streets, Omaha, Nebraska, April 24 and 25, 1948. With attendance from 24 different states and an estimated figure of 7500 visitors, the hours of the show had to be prolonged to accomodate the violet enthusiasts who had to wait in lines for hours.



Mrs. J. W. Hofman (left) and Mr. Raymond Gain (right) exhibit chairman look over plants to be exhibited at the show.

The Exhibit was conducted on a national basis. There were 64 different varieties on display. A commercial display was staged by Mr. Raymond Gain (Faulkner Florist) of Omaha, Nebraska. The novelty table received many comments and won 3 ribbons for Mrs. J. W. Hofman. The exhibit in all made the people of the north-west conscious of the newest hobby and acquainting them all with the different varieties of Saintpaulias.

The judges were from the neighboring state. Mrs. Arthur Pyle, of Russell, Iowa, Mrs. Harry Baird, Boone, Iowa, and Mrs. Perry Howard of Atlantic, Iowa.

Prize awards as follows;

- 1st - Mrs. C. C. Andersen, 2459 Larimore Ave., Omaha, Nebr.
- 2nd - Mrs. W. P. Danhke, 5611 Newton Road, Merrian, Kansas.
- 3rd - Mrs. A. F. Nordgren, 3924 No. 42nd St., Omaha, Nebr.

Best plant in the show (Orchid Beauty) Mrs. C. C. Andersen.

Best multiple plant in show (Double Russian) Mrs. J. W. Hofmann.

Plant from greatest distant point Mrs. W. P. Danhke, Merrian, Kans.

Each day door prizes of plants and books on African Violets were given away.

Mrs. O. E. Kellar, President of the African Violet Society of America Inc., was the honored guest. Mrs. Martin Wangberg of Perry, Iowa, Regional Vice-President assisted with exhibit judging. Mr. R. G. Baxter of Youngstown, Ohio flew to Omaha for the exhibit. Mrs. E. G. Bristol, of Lincoln, organizer of Clubs in Nebraska attended the two days. Mr. Ralph Deitrick and Mrs. J. H. Hoffman of Des Moines, Iowa accompanied the guest of honor.

The displays were arranged against a back ground of silver and light blue which gave a pick up effect for the many varieties on exhibit. Arrangements of several hundred beautiful roses against an extreme back ground of palms enhanced the appearance of the Craft Room and lent a very festive and decorative air to the show. Native African Murals were displayed on the walls.

Much credit for the success of the show goes to Mr. Raymond Gain who did an outstanding job as Exhibits Chairman.

Mrs. J. W. Hofmann is the president of the Omaha Society which was organized in November 1947.



Exclamations of delight were as plentiful as the flowers at the first annual Midwest African Violet Exhibit at Joslyn Memorial. A spokesman for the five women judges said judging "was never like this." Judges included (left to right) Mrs. W. H. Fitzpatrick (wearing orchid), 5611 Hickory Street; Mrs. A. A. Pyle, Russell, Ia.; Mrs. Perry Howard, Atlantic, Ia.; Mrs. A. P. Kilmartin, 4900 South Fourteenth Street, and Mrs. Harry Baird, Boone, Ia. They are shown examining the winning "novelty class" entry from Mrs. J. W. Hofman.



### Huntington, West Virginia Show

Members of the Huntington, West Virginia African Violet Society opened their first show April 10 and 11 on the second floor of the womans club in conjunction with the 1948 Narcissus show. In addition to the exhibits of choice blooms by the members of the club, Taylor's Florists displayed a group of plants including some 28 varieties. Judges were Mr. & Mrs. Warren Gottshall of Alexandria, Virginia. Judging was based on the following points: leaf pattern, size of bloom, color and condition.

The best plant in the show was a Blue Boy entered by Mrs. Hugh Mullarky. Winners by classes follow:

Multiple crown; Mrs. Ralph Hron, first; Mrs. Jesse Alspauch, second, Mrs. H. W. Crowder, third. Blue boys and blue girls; Mrs. Hugh Mullarky, first, and second, Mrs. Ralph Hron, third. Dark blue shades; Mrs. H. W. Crowder, first, Mrs. O. K. Walker, second and third.

Light blue classes; Mrs. Roy Woods, first, Mrs. Mullarky, second and Mrs. Charlie Hughes, third. Pink and light lavender; Mrs. Mullarky, first, Mrs. Woods, second, Mrs. Crowder, third. Dark orchid and plum; Mrs. M. N. McCormick, first, Mrs. Crowder, second and Mrs. Mullarky thirddand honorable mention.



Mr. and Mrs. Warren Gottshall of Alexandria, Va., were the judges of the first annual show of the African Violet Society of Huntington, West Virginia.

### Tea and Exhibit at Oak Ridge

The Oak Ridge, Tennessee African Violet Society held a tea and violet exhibit on Thursday afternoon, May 13th from 1:30 to 4:30. The violets were concentrated in the home of Mrs. John Murray, Society President, and tea was served at the home of Mrs. James Scott directly across the street from Mrs. Murray. Guests attended by invitation only, each club member having invited 5 of her friends. This first exhibit was very successful and we were only sorry more people could not see our display. Perhaps we can do our next on a larger scale, and open it to the public. About 175 blooming violets, comprising some 60 varieties were shown in novel and unusual arrangements. 65 guests called during the afternoon. Officers of the Society are

Mrs. Murray, Pres.  
Mrs. M. K. Walsh, V. Pres.  
Mrs. St. John Davis, Corr. Secy.  
Mrs. Robert Orr, Rec. Secy.  
Mrs. Arthur Bowman, Treas.

Enthusiasm for violets is so great here in Oak Ridge that our group is now organizing sections.

On June 23, the Ionantha Section was organized and perhaps by the time this goes to press we will have started another section. Our plans are to have each section composed of 12 members. Twice a year all the sections will meet together. Each section will have its own officers but there will be in addition a President of all sections — she will be the guiding hand! We feel that we have done right well in the 7 months we have been a Society!

### Richmond, Indiana has Second Show

The African Violet Society of Richmond, Indiana held its second Violet Show on May 14 and 15 at the Second National Savings Bank of Richmond, Indiana.

Many visitors attended the beautiful display of 170 choice plants representing 34 varieties which were entered in 6 classes.

Saintpaulia admirers from 32 surrounding cities were registered, and showed most enthusiastic interest by asking questions on violet culture and for information about the different varieties in the show.

Mrs. Earl Mutchner, President and Mrs. Pearl Fitzsimons, Secretary announce that so successful was the show this spring the members are making plans for another show to be held in the fall.

Editors Note: Send your Club news to Maxine Wangberg 1920 West 3rd. Street, Perry, Iowa. She is your Club News Reporter.



# African Violet Show in Alexandria

Historic Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria, Virginia was the scene of the first African Violet Show ever staged in that section of the country. The show was open to the public from 1:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M., on May 22nd under the sponsorship of the Metropolitan African Violet Club and the Xi Gamma Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority for the purpose of raising money to be donated to a fund for Cancer Research.

For a "first" of its kind in the Metropolitan Area of Washington, D. C. and the first show of any sort ever staged by the sponsors, the exhibit comprised of 159 beautiful plants in 65 varieties, was well received by the public and aided greatly in furthering the interest of Saintpaulias in the immediate locality.

Due to the number of varieties entered it was necessary to make awards by color group rather than by each of the varieties represented by a small number of plants. Judging was in the capable hands of Mrs. R. R. Blackburn of High Point, North Carolina and Dr. Freeman Weiss, Washington, D. C.

A beautiful silver compote, courtesy of Mr. R. G. Baxter, Youngstown, Ohio, was awarded to Mrs. W. Duff Wilson for her Mentor boy judged "Best in the Show". Mrs. O. H. Murphy won, as the second prize, a silver pie knife - also donated thru the courtesy of Mr. Baxter - for her multiple crown plant of Mentor Boy. Ionantha grandiflora won for the Warren Gottshalls a collection of plants donated most willingly by the Tinari Floral Gardens of Bethayres, Pennsylvania.

Ribbons and Honorable Mentions for each of the groups set up were awarded as follows:

## "Multiple Crowns"

- 1st — Blue Boy — Mrs. Geo. K. Klipstein
- 2nd — Amethyst — Mrs. Avery Rawles
- 3rd — Blue Boy — Mrs. Geo. K. Klipstein

Honorable Mention — Blue Boy — Mrs. I. Richards

Blue Boy Supreme — Mrs. Rawles

Blue Girl — Mrs. Rawles

## "Dark Blue & Purple Shades"

- 1st — Neptune — Mrs. Martha Husted
- 2nd — Viking — the Gottshalls
- 3rd — Viking — Mrs. Husted
- Honorable Mention — Blue Darling — Mrs. E. H. Toms

"Lavender, Lilac, Pink and Orchid Shades"

- 1st — West Coast Amethyst — Mrs. Hazel LaMar
- 2nd — BiColor — the Gottshalls
- 3rd — BiColor — Mrs. J. Raymond Hoy

Honorable Mention — Pink Beauty — Mrs. Klipstein

Lavender Lady — Mrs. Toms  
"Seedlings and Un-known Varieties"

All awards by the Gottshalls

"Rose & Light Purple Shades"

1st — Trilby — Mrs. Toms

2nd — Red Head Girl — Mrs. Wilson

3rd — Trilby — Mr. Karl Peterson

Honorable Mention

Strauss Orchid — Mr. Peterson

Red Head — Mrs. LaMar

"Whites and Off-White"

1st — White Lady — Mrs. H. E. Bufkin

2nd — Blushing Lady — Mr. Karl Peterson

3rd — Blushing Maiden — John & David Gottshall

"Light Blue Shades"

1st — Blue Eyes — Mrs. May B. King

2nd — Crinkles — Mrs. LaMar

3rd — Blue Amethyst — Mrs. King

Honorable Mention — "Seedling" (Erroneously placed) — Mrs. Toms.



Three prize winners Alexandria show

2nd. Prize Mentor Boy Mrs. Murphy

1st. Prize Mentor Boy Mrs. Wilson

3rd. Prize Ionantha-Grandiflora Gottshalls

In background, "Natural Setting" Mrs. Fombuena

One plant of Ruffles drew a lot of attention, in spite of the sparseness of open blossoms, because of its large size and beautiful foliage. Blue Eyes also had her share of attention because of her beauty and the fact that a mature plant of this variety is rather a rarity in the section. Two other plants that drew a lot of "Oh's" and "Ah's" were those labeled "Strauss Orchid" and "Red Amethyst"; and well they should for both are deserving. The Strauss Orchid has a beautiful foliage as well as blooms and the Red Amethyst,

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## Show at Greenville is Outstanding Success

though still small, had lovely dark spooned foliage and very dark and decidedly red-purple flowers. A quilted leaf, pale orchid and an almost bicolored very pale lavender seedlings drew a lot of favorable comment along with another blue seedling - the latter seemed to draw its praise from the prolificness and size of its blooms as there was little else to class it as a distinct, or different variety.

The "crowning achievement" of the entire show, however, was a miniature "natural setting" beautifully and artistically arranged by Mrs. E. M. Fonbuena on a large wicker tray. The arrangement contained, among many things, ferns, honeysuckle, "Lady Slippers" African Violets, rocks and moss, Mrs. Fonbuena could not have done as well had she dug up, in its entirety, a three-foot section of any sense "primeval". Nature, in this case, was put to the task.

### Show at Greenville is Outstanding Success

The African Violet Show sponsored by the Greenville, South Carolina African Violet Club and held at Sears. Shelter April 20 was a successful undertaking which will be long remembered by the more than 1000 who attended.

Mrs. W. G. Grigg of Sylva, N. C., believing that the early bird catches the worm, was up at 4 o'clock getting her Amethyst ready for the trip, and she won the award for the most perfect specimen.

Mrs. Winder Gary of Seneca won the sweepstake prize, taking six blue ribbons on her Viking, Admiral, Myrtle, Purple Prince, Double Russian and Blue Bird.



### ARRANGEMENTS

In the special arrangements blue ribbons went to the following: Mrs. J. B. Easterlin, whose white porcelain cart with donkey brought home a Blue Girl; Mrs. C. E. Russell's lovely arrangement with well; Mrs. M. Lee Hunter's wooden bowl arrangement, and Grady Williams rolled out the barrel and took home a blue.

Mrs. M. Lee Hunter with her wooden cart loaded with violets won a red as did Mrs. J. Frank Hudson's porcelain stork.

Three yellow ribbons went to Mrs. M. Lee Hunter with her arrangements in a bamboo log, Mrs. Claud Iller's bellboy and Mrs. Claude Russell for her girl stand.

Mrs. M. R. Pickler won a white with her coffee table arrangement.

### OTHER AWARDS

Mrs. J. Frank Hudson of Greenville won four blue ribbons on Double Duchess, Pink Lady, Red Head, and Blue Scoop.

Mrs. M. R. Pickler, three on Silver Wings, Blue Girl (Multiple Crown) and Mary Wac.

Mrs. Hugh Garner, Greenville, Blue Boy, Neptune and Red Head.

Mrs. Nellie Halsell, Norseman and Orchid Beauty.



Executive Board of Greenville African Violet Club  
Left to right Mrs. Lee Harris, Mrs. J. Frank Hudson, Mrs. Claude E. Russell, President, standing. Mrs. John Rainey, Mrs. C. W. Scales, Mrs. J. B. Easterlin, Mrs. Joe Robertson

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## Knoxville Exhibit

Mrs. C. J. Major, Greenville, Bi-Color and Gorgeous.

Mrs. J. K. Lominack, Spartanburg, Trilby and Sapphire.

Miss Annie Laurie Lowe, Greenville, Blue Amazon and Heavenly Blue.

Mrs. J. W. Brabnam, Greenville, Spoon Neptune.

Mrs. E. B. Nash, Greenville, Blue Girl.

Mrs. O. W. Sutton, Greenville, Blue Boy.

Mrs. F. E. Donald, Greenville, White Lady.

Mrs. H. E. Stewart, Greenville, Pink Lady, (Multiple Crown).

Mrs. R. L. Prince, Greenville, Pink Beauty.

Mrs. A. C. Black, Belmont, N. C., Mentor Boy.

Mrs. A. B. Forrester, Greenville, Red Head.

Mrs. J. R. Childress, Greenville, Neptune.

Judges were Mrs. A. M. Chreitzberg of Spartanburg, Mrs. Arch Walker of Spartanburg and Mrs. Neva Turner, Route 5, Greenville.

### Knoxville Exhibit

The Knoxville Saintpaulia Society had their exhibit in the Green Room of the Y. W. C. A. on April 8.

It was well patronized by the public with some 900 visitors during the eight hours it was open, some of them driving as much as 100 miles, which certainly shows that mention African Violet and you have a crowd.

This exhibit consisted of a variety of ways to use African violets even to a propagating table and hospital for sick and ailing plants.

On the shelves of a built-in book case which was lined with white crepe paper, several different varieties were displayed, all in full bloom and good foliage, some large and some small, some of the containers were tiny antique coffee cups, low bowls, attractive modern pottery containers. On the top shelves the plants were turned at angles, even on their sides to show them to their best advantage. This made a very picturesque scene with pinks, purples, blues, reds, bi-colors and whites. Below this case several wrought iron stands were placed holding large plants profusely in bloom.

On the classification table one of every variety that the club could make available was displayed which consisted of around 90 varieties. This display was attractively shown on tables with three tiers covered with a cool shade of green cloth.

A breakfast table done in pink antique china on white linen using a Pink Beauty Violet caught the eye of many visitors.

Another feature admired by many was a tea table, using a lovely antique lace cloth with bands of ribbon handpainted. A beautiful plant of *Ionantha* in a brass teapot was used for the center piece. Brass candle holders, with candles of the same shade of green as the ribbon in the cloth were placed on each side.

A natural woodland setting was arranged on a large tray using moss, old pieces of worn limbs of trees with ferns and small wild plants. Two plants of African Violets were used in this display, one Pink Beauty and a Blue Eyes.

All methods and steps of propagating were shown on the propagation table including different potting material that could be used.

On the hospital table, plants with disease that could be found showed the symptoms and results. A hostess was at the table to offer advice on how to control and rid your plants of these diseases.

Many large showy plants were used on smaller tables, on window ledges, in wrought iron stands and etc. to make the display attractive.

Last, wooden posts with large square bases were wrapped with white crepe paper, winding ivy around the posts. Wide white, satin ribbon was stretched from post to post using a bow at each post. These were placed a few feet from the displays to keep the Violets from being handled, but also added much beauty to the exhibit.

The Springfield, Missouri chapter of the African Violet Society, under the sponsorship of the Red Cross has undertaken the voluntary project of creating interest in African Violets at the O'Reilly Veterans Administration Hospital. The club, whose membership totals 50, hopes to present each of the 460 patients with a beautiful blooming plant as well as leaves and other sized plants they will need to learn their care and propagation. The local florists and seed stores have co-operated heartily by furnishing, free of charge, large supplies of pots, vermiculite, fertilizers, peat and other needed materials.

The patients are showing great interest and the club members are having a great experience when, dressed in surgeons uniforms, they show the boys how to care for violets.

Officers for this group are Mrs. John Miller, Pres.; Mrs. A. H. Hass, Vice Pres.; Mrs. J. D. Armstrong, Sec't.; Mrs. Shelby Roney, Treas.



# Experiences with "Fermate"

Regina and Warren Gottshall

Saintpaulias are not only subjected to attacks by insects but are, unfortunately, the prey of diseases and fungus in various forms. The fungus which can, in some instances, cause rot, either to crown, leaf or petiole (stem) is, according to some authorities present in all potting soil; however, they do not take their toll on plants that are in healthy condition until something happens to the health or physical features of the plant. The plant can be weakened from a variety of causes - lack of water, too much of it, fertilizing, starvation or injury (either in separating or by the removal of leaves, suckers or bloom stalks).

Taking them in order - Lack of water - when this condition exists the plants are called upon to support themselves on the moisture and nutriment existing in the plant itself - naturally the turgescence of the plant is greatly lessened and with it goes the life or "backbone" of the plant and a weakened plant is the result. This is the case when leaves or suckers are cut for rooting as a great deal of support comes from the life already stored within the leaf, or sucker, until roots are formed to do their natural work and thus relieving the strain on the material rooting. A plant thus weakened is subjected to any kind of attack.

Over-watering — when this condition exists the fungus present in the soil has an excellent chance to multiply for the natural home of these spores is in moisture — during dry spells they lie dormant. Extended dry spells may possibly be their death (and probably that of the plant). Removal of leaf, suckers or bloom stalks at this time leaves an open wound giving access to the fungus spores and rot sets in.

Over-fertilization — too much of a thing can be as much of an evil as entire lack of it. With over-fertilization the plants are "forced to death", as is the case with a lot of weed killers that work on this principle of over-stimulation; or, the plant itself can be mortally burned from too much contact with the fertilizer. Even in strength there is weakness and in this case over-fertilizing eventually causes a weakened condition as an obvious result.

Starvation — When the plant has used all the "food materials" in the soil and receives no new diet, either by repotting or fertilization, it can do nothing but weaken and eventually die — like a fish out of water, its very existence is gone.

Injury — as above mentioned the separation of plants, the removal of leaves, suckers or bloom stalks, leaves an

open wound. When separating it is quite frequently the case that a few, or many, of the roots are broken and the "open wound" is present. Entry of the fungus spores is only too possible under this condition.

In combating fungus diseases Fermate seems to be the answer. No doubt there are countless other counter-agents of which we have had no experience (our only trial was with this product) so we lay no claim to Fermate being the only "medicine".

. At one time seed had been sown upon the top of a pan of vermiculite watered with a popular fertilizer and vitamin B1. In due course the seed germinated and simultaneously cobwebby mold completely covered the top of the vermiculite. The seedlings were completely smothered but we had the opportunity for our first experience with Fermate. According to directions received we mixed  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon to a pint of warm water with soap added as a "spreader". Considerable shaking was necessary, it is true, before it was "ready to use", but when sprayed upon the vermiculite the mold completely disappeared within two days, with only one application.

Another experience had to do with what we term "stem rot". A plant persisted in drooping its outer leaves and upon examination showed that the base of the petiole was starting to rot where it joined the crown. There was no obvious fault to be found with the crown itself and the roots were whole and healthy. As an experiment the lower leaves were all removed and the entire crown exposed was then painted with a dry camel's-hair brush dipped into the straight Fermate. The "stem rot" condition has not reappeared since that time and the plant stopped drooping leaves.

A report received (which was our first introduction to the use of Fermate) related of an experience with "leaf rot" (so identified by a greenhouseman). The plant in question developed soft brown spots upon the leaves and the advice was to use the above mentioned Fermate spray. The spots dried up — true they caused an unsightly appearance to the plant but there were no new marks putting in an appearance. (The greenhouseman also advised that all their seed flats are sprayed one week after sowing to prevent "damping-off" rot).

From personal observation we can speak of two other instances. One had to do with a leaf received through the mails in perfect condition. The leaf was "firmed" for a few days in water contain-

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ing Hyponex and vitamin B1 and then potted. Within a day or two after potting rot started at the side edge of the leaf and within another two days had nearly reached the central vein of the leaf itself. This rotted spot was "painted" top and bottom with straight Fermate and the next day had dried to a hard brown, scar. The rot had stopped; this was a month ago but it yet remains to be seen whether the leaf will survive enough to produce plants although it looks better and is more firm than it was when the rot developed. The second case had to do with a group of seedlings that had been individually potted. In about a dozen cases moss, or mold, appeared upon the top of the soil and a pencil point, dipped into Fermate was used to "rework", or loosen, the soil on the top. Again within a very short time the mold and moss had disappeared and after five or six weeks has not made its reappearance.

Fermate may not be the answer to these problems but for us it has worked and we can do naught but "swear by" its effectiveness.

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## East Huntington Club Makes Debut.

The East Huntington African Violet Club of Huntington, West Virginia, which was organized June 10 with a charter membership of 13, announces the election of the following officers for the coming year:

President: Miss Alma Harrison  
Vice Pres.: Mrs. Cora Barrows  
Secretary: Mrs. A. A. Criddle  
Treasurer: Mrs. Tom Willey  
Publicity: Mrs. W. E. Lucas

## October Exhibit in Battle Creek

The Battle Creek African Violet Society will hold their September meeting at the home of Betty Manaweck, Breezy Bluff, Gaguac Lake. In addition to the regular program there will be a Chinese Auction of plants to raise funds toward the exhibit planned for October.

## Springfield Society.

At the second meeting of the African Violet Society of Springfield, Pennsylvania the following officers were elected:

President: Mrs. R. J. Schadewald  
Vice Pres.: Mrs. J. Victor Turner  
Secretary — Mrs. Phillips Filing  
Treasurer: Mrs. Wallace Collum

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# The African Violet Magazine

VOL. 2 NO. 2

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# The African Violet Magazine

Vol. 2 No. 2

## Staff

Alma Wright, Editor

4030 McCalla Ave. Knoxville 15, Tenn.

Mary Parker, Co-Editor

Harrill Hills, Knoxville 18, Tenn.

Assistant Editors

Elsie Freed

Boyce M. Edens

Arthur Chard

News Reporters —

Harriet F. Lawton,

Maxine Wangberg,

Emily Hoden,

Regina Gottshall

Warren Gottshall,

COVER DESIGN: Blue Boy Supreme

Photo by Ross Hahn

A handsome plant of compact growth, with heavy fluted leaves and extra large, dark blue - violet blossoms of velvety texture.

## The Editor Says:

Dear Members: Will you please notify us if you are not receiving your copy of the magazine? Or if you know of someone who is not receiving theirs. We will never know that you are not getting it unless you tell us about it!

As you will notice we have different printing on the front of the envelope this time. We are doing everything within our power to see that you receive your copy. A routine check is made among a certain number of members each time to see if they are in receipt of their magazine. We will be most grateful if you sign your card, and return it promptly.

The members of the staff listed above all serve without compensation. Many hours of their time are given to the making up of each issue of this publication. We will appreciate your cooperation and assistance in providing us with your correct address if we have your address listed wrong, your new address if you are moving, or in notifying us at once if you have failed to receive your magazine!

Suggestions as to subject material for future issues will be very welcome. Your club reporter, Maxine Wangberg, will be happy to receive your club news, and will forward it to the editor.

If you have had an unusual or interesting experience in growing your African Violets, may we invite you to write an article for publication? Contributions are used as space and make-up will allow.

## Officers

Mrs. O. E. Keller, President  
1223 E. Oak Park  
Des Moines 16, Iowa

Mrs. O. M. Coleman, 1st V. Pres.  
1231 Druid Pl., N. E.,  
Atlanta, Ga.

Mr. J. W. Good, 2nd V. Pres.  
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Recording Secretary  
4030 McCalla Ave.  
Knoxville 15, Tenn.

Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Corres. Sec.  
14225 McCracken Rd.  
Cleveland, Ohio

Mr. Boyce M. Edens, Treasurer  
2694 Lenox Rd. N. E.  
Atlanta, Georgia

Each article sent in cannot be published in the immediate next magazine, but will be used from time to time in future issues. Do let us hear from you!

Your next magazine will be mailed to you on or about March 1st to 10th, just before the convention. It will contain in addition to convention news, articles by members of our regular staff, a number of other interesting articles, including some practical information about cyclamen mites by Neil C. Miller and Earl T. Baker, Variegateds by Phyllis Ferrall, New Life for Old Plants by Ruth Walsh.

Do you know of a business firm or a grower whose products you have used and found reliable? Pass the good word along. We would like to solicit their advertising.

The turn of the year is here bringing with it promise of newer and finer varieties yet to come. Whispers come to us of new introductions for 1949. A successful Saintpaulia year is just ahead.

To all members, our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Sincerely,

Alma Wright

Advertising rates are \$3.00 per column inch.

The African Violet Society of America, Incorporated does not necessarily endorse the advertising appearing in this magazine.

The African Violet Magazine is published quarterly by the African Violet Society of America, Incorporated and is entered as third class matter at the post-office, Knoxville, Tennessee.



# The President's Message

## Appreciation

I am deeply grateful for both the opportunity and the honor that has been mine for the past two years in the very pleasant service as your President. It seems such a short time since a mere handful of amateur growers of African violets from six different states East of the Rockies met in Atlanta, Georgia in November 1946 to attend the first really large and inclusive African Violet Show. It was my privilege to be one of this group. I know its past history, but it is always interesting to recall not only this small group of enthusiasts who became the first Charter Members of the Society, but also the huge crowd of local people who attended the Show. There were more than 8,000 of them.

This magnificent display of well-grown African violets and the great manifestation of interest in this our favorite house plant really inspired the launching of African Violet Society of America. Since then, the Society has grown from just a few Charter Members to our present total of 1,355 members who live in every state in the Union, in a number of foreign countries and in our neighboring Dominion of Canada. We continue to grow, steadily, and before long we will reach the 2,000 mark. I genuinely appreciate this splendid, healthy growth that has taken place during the past two years of my administration.

I appreciate, too, the progress the Society has made in its initial effort to classify by name and description many of the varieties of African violets that are now being grown in this Country. We have, as I have indicated, only made a reasonably good start in this large and continuing task. Already certain of our Officers and interested Members are carefully considering how best to take the next progressive step in the part of this task that is ahead of us, i. e., the establishment of an Official Plan of Registration, through which all the different varieties and species of saintpaulias can be registered with the Society, by name and description, from time to time in the future. For all of this I am most grateful, because a practical and sound plan of Registration is almost sure to be the best means through which the duplication of variety names, now causing so much confusion, can be prevented.

Then, too, I appreciate the many fine and enthusiastic local African Violet Clubs and Societies that have sprung up in every part of the Country during the past two years. These local groups are helping, no end, to popularize the growing of African violets by an ever-increasing throng of flower lovers throughout the Country.

I am particularly thankful for the ever-growing spirit of generosity back of the sharing of leaf-cuttings from a large number of different varieties of African violets by amateur growers on a really widespread basis. It's a most popular gesture, as well as a helpful service, to exchange leaf cuttings. This action tends to greatly increase the distribution of the different varieties to many collectors and to the host of beginners throughout the Country.

My earnest thanks is also extended to the many trustworthy commercial growers of African violets in every part of the United States. They have done so much to increase and improve the number of different varieties, and will naturally continue to perform this very helpful and necessary service in the future. Certainly I commend all such commercial growers to our members and to the vast African violet consumer trade. It should be a pleasure, as well as a profit, for all of us to patronize them.



## *Growing African Violets in Nutrient Solution Commonly Called "Hydroponics"*

Harry S. Houghton

African Violets and other house plants are not easily grown in a small steam heated apartment in the center of Boston where the light is poor and the winters are long and cold. If you are one of those unfortunates who must take business trips requiring you to be away often, sometimes as much as a month or more at a time, there is an added problem.

This article is written with the thought that others may have a similar problem and my method of reaching a solution may be of assistance.

We have all known for a number of years that plants can be grown without soil provided they are furnished with food which is generally supplied by soil. Food consumed by roots of plants must be in solution.

Soilless growing of plants, flowers and vegetables, is called "Hydroponics" and has the advantage over soil growing of eliminating all soil diseases, overwatering, not watering sufficiently, wrong type of soil and the many insects that live and come from the soil.

A number of different methods can be used in growing flowers without soil. It is not possible to discuss all of them in this short article. Therefore I shall describe only three of the major methods.

When living in a land of sunshine and warm climate the raising of flowers does not present the problems encountered when living in a cold climate of long winters

and a little sunshine, particularly if you do not have any yard and only a few windows in your living quarters.

Several times I had African Violets well along, in one instance twenty-two different varieties, when it was necessary to take a trip. Practically all violets were dead upon my return. My last effort was to try "Hydroponics" and be sure the system was fully automatic.

There are three methods of growing without soil: **SAND CULTURE**; **WATER CULTURE**; and **SUB-IRRIGATION**. These are well discussed in detail in several books. I studied "Soilless Growth of Plants" by Ellis and Swaney, second edition, revised and enlarged by Tom Eastwood, Publishers Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 330 West 42nd St., New York 18, N. Y., 1947.

### THE SAND CULTURE METHOD

The plant is placed in pure sand (which is merely a means of support) and then pour water containing chemical elements around the roots. These chemicals are the food and fertilizer which are supplied by the soil when raising them in soil.

With this method it is possible to set up a great number of inexpensive types or systems of operation either inside or outside of the home. You will have freedom from soil diseases; roots can grow larger and breathe easily; plants can be removed or transplanted without injury; and sand is a good strong supporting agent.



# *Growing African Violets in Nutrient Solution*

## *Commonly Called Hydroponics*

### THE WATER CULTURE METHOD

This method has many advantages and can be used to raise flowers and vegetables on a very large scale.

The plants must be supported by some means and the roots hang into the solution. The roots must be aerated. This can be accomplished by removing the plant every day and allowing the roots to hang in the air for a few moments or supply a means of pumping air into the solution continuously, or allow the solution to fall or drip or drop through the air.

### SUB-IRRIGATION METHOD

This system is the same as the sand culture with the exception of the method used to feed the chemicals to the roots.

Plants are placed in a container containing sand which furnishes the support for the plant. The chemical is pumped up through the sand from a storage and allowed to drain back into the storage.

It is interesting to note that the occupational armies of the United States in the South Pacific and Japan now are living on vegetables raised in Hydroponic Gardens. Many thousands of tons of vegetables are raised.

Because of the small quarters and the necessity of going away often it was decided to use in our apartment the Automatically Operated Sub-Irrigation Method.

A cabinet was designed and built. It was painted by an expert so it resembles an antique.

Dimensions of cabinet are approximately 12 inches wide, 44 inches long and 33 inches high. The tank containing the sand and violets slips down inside of the top until flush so nothing but the sand can be seen and this of course is later completely covered by the plants when they grow in size. On the front are two doors which open up and swing out of the way so a bottom storage tank can be placed inside the cabinet directly below the top tank containing the sand. The bottom tank is some 10 inches shorter than the cabinet thus allowing space at one end in which a small motor driven centrifugal pump is placed with the necessary rubber tubing, check valves and connections so the pump can take the solution from the storage tank and pump it up through the sand of the top tank and drain back into the storage tank ready for the next cycle.

In this same space is placed an electrically operated time switch which turns the pump motor on and off three times a day. In each instance the switch allows the pump to operate ten minutes before turning it off.

The liquid runs down into the storage tank through an overflow pipe which is set so the solution covers the crowns of the violets on each pumping. Two small holes in opposite corners in the bottom of the top tank allow the solution to completely drain from the sand into the storage tank in approximately thirty minutes. These two holes are covered with a piece of broken flower pot so the sand will not come through the hole. Air is drawn into the sand as the solution drains out, thus aerating the roots. The bottom tank is far enough below the top tank so the liquid drops and is also aerated.

The cabinet is mounted on rubber tired, ball bearing castors and can be moved from one room to another, also turned so the plants may have the light from the windows reversed from time to time.

The cabinet is self-contained. No tanks, parts or pump are visible when the doors are closed. You merely plug into any base plug and the automatic device is in operation. The consumption of electricity is less than a two watt light burning one-half hour per day.

The African Violets are beautiful; large, healthy and with no diseases or insects. A leaf can be placed in the sand and six months later a beautiful plant is in full bloom. We go away and leave the apartment for several weeks and the flowers are taken care of for us automatically.

When the pump is in operation the sand is, of course, saturated with the solution which causes it to be in a mushy state. At this time you can remove a plant or leaf and place it wherever you wish and no harm is done. Suckers are removed easily, in fact you can rearrange plants or do anything you wish, they respond beautifully.

### "AFRICAN VIOLETS"

for

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# Watering by the Constant Water-Level

Harriet F. Lawton

Editors Note: Because of many requests for more specific information this article has been re-written with added details and illustrations.

There are various drawbacks in the keeping of house plants, especially during the winter months when windows are closed much of the time.

Of course one element is gas and that is no mean consideration. However, if gas is used, it does not necessarily prohibit the growing of house plants. Take precautions though and raise plants as far away from burners as possible; and, check for leaks. The gas company will do this for the asking.

One of the main considerations in house plant culture is extremely dry air due to furnace heat during winter months. Plants need some fresh air daily, but they particularly need some moisture in the air. Most of our houses are far too dry and humidity can only be replaced artificially to make up for what is removed by furnace heat. There are numerous ways in which this can be done; Place water pans on radiators or elsewhere in the room; the greater the number of plants kept in a given area, the greater the humidity; or one may increase humidity by daily sprayings. (Saintpaulias will take it providing the water is warm and if sun does not shine on leaves when wet.) But, I have found by far the most satisfactory way is by watering by the constant water-level where an aura of humidity surrounds the plants at all times.

Watering in this way is being advocated by many State Colleges and green-houses and is considered by them the most up to date method of plant care. Wick watering is also by capillarity but with the constant water-level, one may care for a number of plants at one time. I will explain the setup which I have used quite satisfactorily and this has overcome the difficulties described above for me and others who have tried it. An article appeared on this in Vol. 1 No. 2 but is being repeated here for the benefit of those who were not members at that time and includes one or two improvements as well as illustrations. Directions and equipment are as follows:

## Step 1, Figure 1

Metal pan. (rustless metal or rust preventive inside) 33" long x 7" wide x 6" high. Must be at least 6" high. Other measurements can be adjusted to meet one's need; space into which it must fit or size of pots to be used.

## Step 2 and 3, Water-Conductor, Figures 2, 2a and Figure 3.

2 Metal - non rust. A metal strip  $4\frac{1}{4}$ " wide x  $31\frac{1}{2}$ " long or  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " less length of tank. Bend strip in center lengthwise to a better than right angle degree. All three dimensions should be approximately

the same; the two solid sides and the space at the bottom. The height of the water-conductor at its peak should be 2" from the center bottom. This is important only insofar as it furnishes an ample water supply.

3 A piece of metal 9" x 6". Have this the height of tank and 2" longer than the width. Cut notch in the center of the long way to match in angle to that in step # 2, having the two 1" ends facing toward the end of tank. Solder these two parts together, but do not fasten water-conductor to tank. (leave it free). This makes a pocket or well through which one waters. (see illustration.) Illustration shows water-conductor 1" below top of tank. I have found however this is a mistake as it does not make full use of the capacity of tank and will have others made as directed above.

## Step 4, Figures 4 and 4a.

Gadget for leveling sand. This is made of a strip of wood of about 1" square stock with a piece of sheet metal screwed to it. Wood should be cut about 4" longer than width of tank. Sheet metal should be an easy fit inside width of tank and in height measures below wooden strip, 3" less height of tank. Example: Tank as shown is 6" high. 2" of pebbles and 1" of sand on bottom total 3". Therefore, metal strip must be 3" high below wooden strip. (Figure 4a)

When the above directions have been carried out, fill tank as in step 5.

## Step 5, Figure 5

1. Place water-conductor in pan with about 4 of the wooden plant markers at intervals crosswise under the water-conductor. This raises it slightly to permit a free flow of water.

2. 2" of pebbles or to top of water-conductor.

3. 1" of coarse sand. \*See note.

4. Porous pots with plants. \*\*See note.

5. Sand half way up on outside of pots. (Pots sunk in sand.)

\*After the 2" of pebbles and 1" of coarse sand have been put in, flood the sand or make it "soupy". It is more easily shifted about in this way. The sand should then be leveled off with the gadget as shown in step 4. After the sand has been leveled off, draw off excess water by use of a rubber tube and creating a vacuum. (This is done by starting the flow of water through the tube by use of a syringe.) Make sure when sand is packed down with water removed, that there is still a full inch of sand above



Fig 1.  
Metal  
Pan

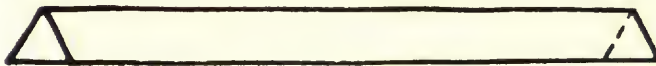
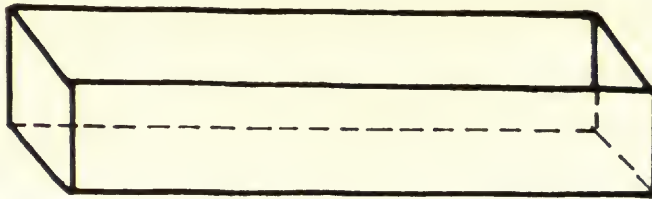


Fig 2. Water Conductor



Fig 2a. End View

Top View



End View

Fig 3.

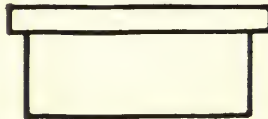


Fig 4. Sand Leveling Gadget



Fig 5. 1

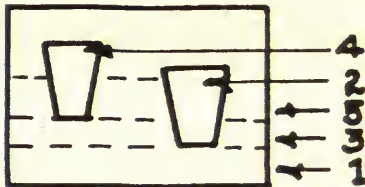


Fig 6.

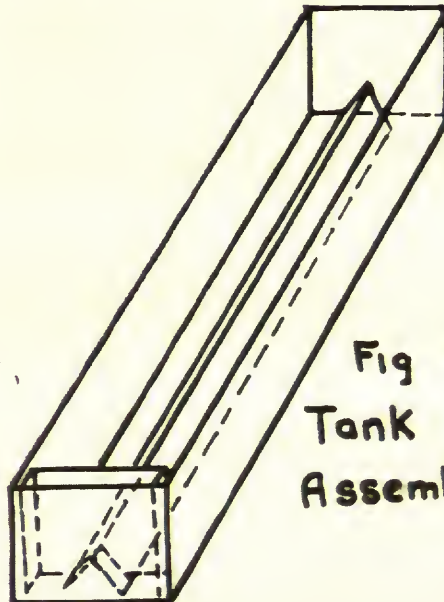


Fig 4a.  
Tank  
Assembled

Continued on Page 8

## Watering by the Constant Water-Level

pebbles or 3" in all. Place pots with plants as indicated in step 5 and put more sand about them. Flood again, smooth sand over and drain off water until water is at top of water-level. The amount the pots are sunk in sand depends on a number of things; the coarseness of sand, the porosity of pots, (some pots are more porous than others) the size of pots and the amount of moisture in the surrounding air. For instance, the top of a 4" pot is further away from the sand upon which it rests than a 3" inch pot. A pot indoors in winter needs to be sunk in sand further than one the same size on porch in summer. One can keep 2" and 3" and at times even 4" pots on porch in summer merely resting on top of sand. Outdoor conditions are such that as a rule the pots will absorb some moisture through the walls of the pots. The important thing is to have the water-level just 1" below the bottom of pots. Situations and conditions vary and one must work out their own particular needs. If top soil about plants dries out or does not maintain an even moisture, start building up around pots with sand until it does.

**\*\*Drainage in pots:** Have one piece of crock over hole to permit an entrance of air to the root system.

**Caution:** If plants are being kept too wet, the leaves will turn a rather sickly

yellow in the center of the crown. Also, roots kept too wet cannot keep healthy. By keeping the root ball too wet, the supply of air is somewhat cut off from the roots. This comes from sinking the pots too deeply in sand when there is sufficient moisture in the surrounding air or, in keeping the water level less than an inch below the pots. If these center leaves start to turn yellow, the situation is easily rectified (if taken in time) by having less sand about the pots. The plants will respond readily to this adjustment. One must work out their own growing conditions.

**Size of pots:** Much has been said about the fact that the Saintpaulia does better if over potted; that it does not need to be potbound as is the case with so many plants for good blooming. But, you will surely come to grief if you overpot plants that are automatically watered. By having all this extra earth about the roots, it makes for keeping the earth too wet. The plant cannot tolerate it. Water through well at end of tank until water comes to top of water conductor. Check water daily. If kept on porch during summer, let up on water supply for a day or so in case of a prolonged damp spell. If, at any time any pots should dry out on top, water well from top to re-establish capillarity.

Fig. 7 Step 7



Continued on Page 9



## ROOTING LEAVES OUT OF DOORS IN THE GARDEN

Ruth Noel Walsh

I give my big violets a "Haircut" every once in a while. When the outside leaves become too straggly or yellow, or the plant loses its symmetry, I remove the leaves until I have the size and shape I want. It does not harm the plant and, I believe, induces more and bigger blossoms.

Early in the spring I had some "Blue Boy" leaves which I had removed from an old plant. I gave away as many as I could and still had some left. I did not want to root any more so, what to do with what I had left! I just could not throw them out and I decided to try to root them out of doors in the garden.

On the south side of the house, shaded by large oak trees, we have some bridal wreath bushes. Under one of these, where the soil is good and loose, I stuck the leaves, firming the soil around the stems which were about one and one-half inches long. There is a small forsythia bush in front of the leaves so that no sun could reach them and not too much light.

No extra care or water was given them except occasional sprinkling when we thought the bushes needed it.

Two months later little plants had appeared. It was interesting to see them under the fallen leaves from the bushes and trees showing that a violet leaf needs very little light to root and form new plants.

There are more than two plants from each leaf. The leaf rotted away but the small plants have grown steadily.

I am going to leave two plants out all winter. The rest I will bring to our garden club to give the members. I am almost sure the plants I leave out will freeze, but I want to find out how much cold a violet can stand.

I will try covering one plant with a glass jar, the other with leaves. Next spring I will let you know what results I have.

### Paper Pots —

A friend reports success with using a paper pot inside a pot or jardiniere to grow violets in. Care must be taken not to over water, and let the soil get soggy.

— Kay Duerstling.

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## WATERING BY THE CONSTANT WATER-LEVEL

Continued From Page 8

**Feeding:** Give same plant food as usually used in the same amount at one feeding but about half as often. Have soil damp at time of feeding but with-hold water for a day or so before feeding. Remove pots from pan and pour plant food on in solution. Use warm water. Replace pots in pan and start watering after a day or two.

When pots are sunk in sand a seal is created about the pot after the second flooding of sand. This seal must not be broken as the sand must come in direct contact with pot. If this seal is ever broken by turning a pot or having to remove it temporarily, pour water about pot to create seal again.

**Resting period:** Do not rest plants watered in this way but carry them along in the usual way. With-holding plant food at the time they let up on blooming is the only form of rest they should have. Step 6 instead 5, Figure 6 Alternate.

1. 2" of pebbles.
2. Empty porous pot. (Well)
3. 1" of course sand.
4. Porous pots with plants.
5. Sand about pots.

This method was given in Vol. 1 No. 2. See diagram. If one finds it impossible to equip their tank with a water conductor, they may use an empty, porous pot as a well through which to water in place of the water conductor. The hole in this pot is filed out to make a large opening. Pot rests on top of pebbles. Water through this. I used the empty pot for some time with success but gave it up in favor of the water-conductor. The difficulty in using the empty pot is that the water supply does not flow so freely. It takes longer for the water to percolate amongst the pebbles as the air about the pebbles prevents the water from flowing down through the pot freely when one waters. Therefore, such an even water-level is not always maintained.

### Step 7.

Shows the use of a shallow pan for small plants or even before the new plant-lets come up. Such a pan can be as shallow as  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " and a pan 30" long will accommodate a great many small pots. The water-conductor is only 1" in height, (have pebbles just to top of this) and 1" of sand on top. These small pots need not be sunk in sand. Pots 2" to 3" can be used and you should see them grow!

# *Saintpaulia Idiosyncrasies*

Arthur Chard

If there is a changeling in the horticultural world the *Saintpaulia* is it without question. It is the most unpredictable and, in some respects, unreliable species of plant life. I know of no other plant that can have as many "whys" asked about it with little or nothing for an answer. Perhaps this is responsible, in part, for its universal appeal.

The sketches will help bear out this claim. Illustration #1 is of *S. ionantha grandiflora* oddly with plants growing at intervals along the petiole. #2 shows small plants growing at the veins on the back of the leaf. #3 is from a Blue Girl which bears small plants on the front and back of the leaf. A leaf of Blue Perfection received thru the mail arrived with about an inch break across the center of the leaf, completely severing the midrib. The leaf was planted and in time produced a double crop of plantlets. Five came naturally from the base of the petiole beneath the surface of the rooting medium. Four other perfect little plants were born upon the midrib of the leaf at the break. The five produced at the base of the stem grew more rapidly than did those from the break. When reaching a manageable size they were removed and potted separately and the leaf with its four parasites was replanted. The rootless plants were allowed to remain until they were about 1½ inches tall (mostly because they had been produced upon the underside of the leaf and had curled due to improper lighting. When the leaf was potted for the second time it was reversed, i. e. underside up, and the plants soon straightened). The quartet were then removed and placed in vermiculite for rooting.

Oddities? Probably not when we realize that many, or probably all, such cases are due to injury (either accidental or intentional). Nature is merely taking advantage of the injury by using it as means for reproduction.

There still remain many other idiosyncrasies not explainable - by the author at least. Illustration #4 shows a small plant which has started from a Ruffles flower scape. I believe this is quite frequent with Ruffles but it does occur from time to time on many other varieties as well. Is the explanation for this reproduction as well? Are *Saintpaulias* naturally trailers? Should they produce "runners"? Has there been a cross somewhere between *S. ionantha* and *S. grotei* (of the creeping stem and supposedly not yet introduced into the United States)?

A White Lady once sported a normal petiole up to about two inches in length

where it branched into two stems and each bore a normal fullsized leaf. Yet other plants will bear Siamese stems, i. e. joined the entire length but bearing two separate and distinct leaves at the ends. Two small plants, one each of Blue Girl Supreme and duPont Lavender Pink, produced one perfect funnel shaped leaf apiece. Incidentally the funnel leaf of Blue Girl Supreme was put down into vermiculite nine months ago and to date has produced nothing but roots.

Why do they deviate from the normalcy of the accepted five lobed blooms to have four, six, eight or the doubles? One bloom of Blue Girl on a scape with five other normal flowers had six lobes all the same size but so ruffled as to give the flower quite a double appearance. Pink Beauty, White Lady, and perhaps others, will occasionally turn their blooms topsy-turvy and bear the three lobes at the top and two at the bottom.

Two plants of Blue Bird raised from the same leaf, potted in the same soil and fed the same solutions were placed side by side in the same shaded, south window. One remained the same as all other Blue Birds but the other spooned to such an exaggerated condition that there was barely room for a lead pencil between the rolls.

They will produce varigates and albinos. They will sport, they will spoon, produce red backs, bloom, or refuse to bloom. They will grow gloriously for some people standing in water but here generally get one watering a week (two if time permits) and the saucers emptied after a few hours.

Pink Girl carried a sucker not distinguishable from Pink Beauty both as to leaf and bloom. No fluting, no creamy mark no full round blossom.

These are a few idiosyncrasies recalled at the moment. Doubtless you can think of many more but has anyone an answer for it?

A little soot dug in around the top soil of your *Saintpaulias* will deepen the green of the foliage, and the color of the blossom

— Kitty Lee Richards.

Do not expose newly planted leaves to strong sunlight.

Aid to Blossom — 1 teaspoon of super phosphate in 1 quart of warm water. Super Phosphate is one of the best fertilizers to supply phosphorus quickly. Phosphorus stimulates plant growth.





# Cyclamen Mite and Broad Mite and their Control

Pauline E. Wyland

(Some of this article is based on information by Dr. Floyd Smith, Sr. Entomologist, of the U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.)

African Violets (Saintpaulias) are like babies: feed them good; give them light; drinking water, and clean faces; and they will grow for you. Yes, they, too, have their own illnesses.

Their most common illnesses (or pests) are: MEALY BUG (*Pseudococcus* sp.); CYCLAMEN MITE (*Tarsonemus pallidus* Banks); TWO SPOTTED SPIDER MITE (*Tetranychus binaculatus*) and BROAD MITE (*Tarsonemus latus* Banks).

The mealy bug can be seen easily, and can be readily destroyed. But the cyclamen mite (1/64-1/32 inch long) and the broad mite are so small that a 14 x lens, which is the most powerful movable lens, has to be used. A stationery lens that magnifies higher is much more desirable when looking for the mites.

"Damage by the Cyclamen mite has been confused with another apparently unreported malady known as STUNT. This damage on a plant resembles one that is injured by the mite. Tho by closer observation, one can find distinct differences. Florists, at one time, thought a stunt-affected plant and a cyclamen diseased plant were the same thing."

"The leaves of a plant affected by stunt are shorter, broader, thicker and more brittle. The edges are erased or reduced, and are rolled upward, exposing the lower part of the leaf, and are more noticeable on younger leaves, altho in some cases, these leaves are nearly flat. The top surface is almost smooth or shiny, because the fuzziness is much finer and about 1/3 the length of that on normal leaves. The leaves are pale green, and the center vein near the base of the leaf and the streaks around it are yellowish green. Generally there are no flowers, but if so, they are about 2/3 as large and have short and narrow petals. The stems on both flower and leaves are short and thick. The cause of stunt is not known, and propagation from a stunted plant should not be made, as the newer and younger plants from propagated leaves will develop stunt."

"Cyclamen mite lays 1 to 3 eggs a day", and when it is hatched has 3 pair of legs, but soon acquires another pair, so it is classed with the spider group.

"The egg is smooth, oval and transparent and is laid in crevices. The larva is white, long and narrow and moves slowly. The adult female (a sucking insect) - - - Fig. 1, is a little larger and milky white, long and oval shaped. It, too, moves slowly."

Cyclamen mite, sometimes called the pallid mite, can be brought into the house by the use of garden soil that is infested with mite. This mite attacks delphinium, snapdragon, chrysanthemum, old garden dahlia, lantana, petunia, geranium, verbena and of course, cyclamen. They can live outside during the winter months, also in discarded flower pots and stakes. So to be sure that the soil you use is not infested, it is wise to sterilize it and the flower pots.

"All leaves on healthy African Violets have crenated margins and all except the old mature leaves are moderately thin, soft and pliable in comparison with leaves on diseased plants."

"Cyclamen mite develops slowly and does not quickly kill the new growth. So when the violets are infested, the outer and older leaves are normal, but as the mites hide in the young leaves in the center, these leaves are dwarfed, and edges are usually (but not always) cupped upward, - Fig. 2, and this prevents the leaves from developing normally. This is more noticeable on the young leaves than on the old ones. The pubescence (extreme fuzziness) on these injured leaves is much denser and more cottony, than on normal leaves; and are usually brittle, but are not thickened, and

Continued on Page 13



Fig. 1 *Tarsonemus pallidus*  
Adult Female, much enlarged



Figure 2

MITE INJURED LEAVES

*Illustrations by  
Arthur Chard*



have a puckered appearance. Flowers on slightly diseased plants may be discolored and distorted, but in the more advanced stages of the disease, the flowers more often drop off before they open, as the mites feed in the very tip growth in the tiny flower buds."

(The distorted leaves and flowers also are caused by near starvation and poor soil)

"Cyclamen mites are often found  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch or more below the soil surface, but they do not feed on the roots. They are generally checked by the higher temperatures and lower humidity of summer, but become plentiful and cause more damage in fall, winter and early spring on other plants; but severe injury can be seen at any season on African Violets, as mites continue to breed on plants all year around. They must have living plant tissue to eat, in order to live; they also die when confined to soil alone, or to dry or moist decaying plant tissue".

"The mite spreads readily from plant to plant, if the plants touch each other. In an experiment, they had infested plants 12-18 inches apart from healthy plants for 4-6 months, and healthy plants did not become diseased."

You also can spread mites when handling the diseased plant if you are not careful. Always wash your hands after you have come in contact with a diseased plant or leaf. Be very careful with the tools you use, such as shears, watering-can, etc. You should scald them if you use them on both the diseased plants and the healthy ones. It pays to burn a severely damaged plant, and the container should be disinfected with boiling water right away.

Sodium selenate, a comparatively new soil treatment is very effective for the control of these mites. It is a good preventative insecticide which also helps to keep other insect pests under control. Dissolve 1 gram of sodium selenate to 1 gallon of water and water 4-inch pots twice, 2 weeks apart, with 3 oz. of the solution poured carefully into the soil. If any is spilled on the foliage, it should be rinsed off immediately as it damages the leaves. It should be applied about 3 times a year. Sometimes the chemicals ooze out at the upper edge of the pot. This may be prevented by carefully rubbing paraffin around the upper edge of the pot. Sodium selenate

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## *Cyclamen Mite and Broad Mite*

IS A DEADLY POISON AND IT SHOULD BE USED WITH EXTREME CARE. The soil thus treated should not be used for growing vegetables. It isn't safe to use this poison if there are children in the home.

The new material Tetraethylpyrophosphate used at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoonful to a gallon of water will control this pest as well as the others mentioned earlier, apparently without injury to the plant. This material is very toxic to animal life and should be handled with caution. As yet it is only available in large amounts under various trade names such as Vapatone, Killex 50, and Aphamite.

There are other sprays and dusts, such as naphthalene flakes (paradichlorobenzene), nicotine sulphate, cryocide compounds, DDT, rotenone, N.N.O.R. Spray, Optex Spray, pyrethrum, sulphur dust, Black Leaf 40, Loro Spray, and cyanide fumigation (this is extremely dangerous, as it is deadly poisonous). But commercial growers have failed to control the mite on African Violets with these methods, but have successfully used the hot-water treatment in home-made tanks. This treatment will not help stunt-affected plants.

If the plant is properly treated by the hot-water treatment, you can propagate it, if so desired, by leaf cuttings or divisions.

"The cyclamen mite perhaps does the most damage, but the broad mite (a closely related form) has been found to be on the same plants with the cyclamen mite".

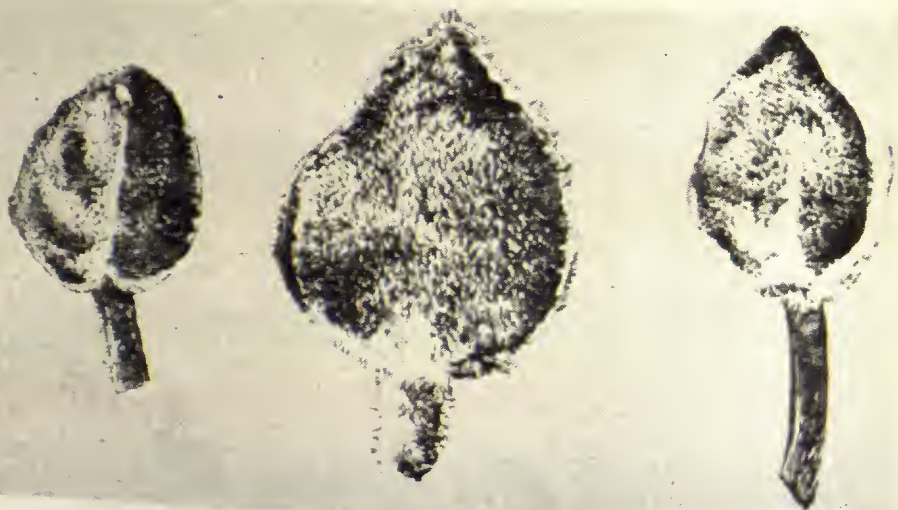
"Until 1928, the broad mite was classed as a tropical species, then this mite was found on tobacco and tomato plants in greenhouses. Both the cyclamen and broad mites were found on the same plants, and on different plants in widely separated part of the country. Probably the broad mite has been in greenhouses for some years but was confused with the cyclamen mite".

"The egg of the broad mite is pearl colored, nearly round, with rows of white spots on the surface; usually flattened against exposed leaf surfaces. The larva is white, smaller, short, broad and moves more rapidly than the cyclamen mite."

"The adult female is milky white to brownish; smaller, short, broad, and it, too, moves more rapidly; usually on exposed under surfaces of leaves."

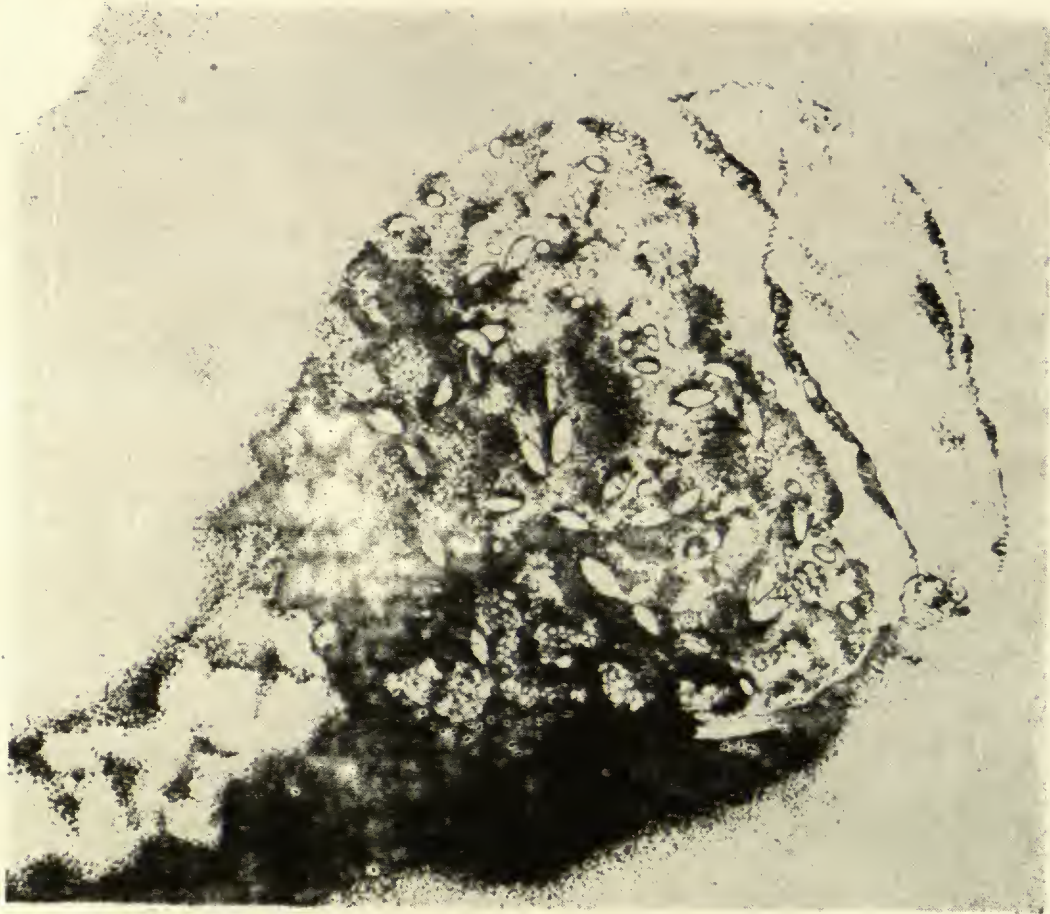
"It lays as many as 7 eggs a day, and likes a much higher temperature than cyclamen mite, but like the cyclamen mite it continues to breed on plants the year around, and will die if confined to soil alone, or in dry or moist decaying plant tissues."

"This mite can attack plants that are more than 18 inches apart, and feeds on the lower surface of the more fully developed leaves. This interferes with the normal growth of the lower surface and causes a puckering down of the leaf, rather than curled. Tho it does not enter the plant crevices as often as the cyclamen



STUNT INJURED LEAVES





EGGS AND ADULTS OF MITES ON STAMEN OF FLOWER, KILLED IN PLACE  
BY HOT WATER TREATMENT

mite, it does extend to the surface of tender petioles, stems and buds, and stops further growth; the buds drop off or the leaves are prevented from growing and appear as small scales, and the plant becomes stunted. The damage by the broad mite is more prominent than by the cyclamen mite."

"The broad mite affects the plant suddenly and spreads rapidly to other plants, while the cyclamen mite spreads more slowly. The broad mite can be controlled by dusts, sprays or fumigation, or by the hot-water treatment. Finely powdered sulphur will stick to the bodies of the larvae and adults and kill them within a few hours. The eggs hatch but the larvae are killed by contact with sulphur still on the leaves if it's not washed off. Diatomaceous earth also kills the mites dusted with it, but is less effective against the hatching larvae. Since some of the mites may not be reached by one application, several dustings should be made to get better results. The dust should be directed toward the lower leaf surfaces and should not be washed off in watering. If the plants are watered early in the day, the dust can be applied after the foliage has dried, and

allowed to remain as long as possible the next day."

"This mite can be controlled by fumigation with calcium cyanide, but the fumigation must be repeated 3 times at 4 day intervals, as the mite is resistant to the gas. Naphthalene kills them in all stages but the egg, so it must be repeated 3 times at 4 day intervals, with 16 hours of fumigation with the temperature of 75-80 degrees. In tests, one application of a white oil emulsion spray containing 1% of oil, killed almost all of the mites, and 3 applications, at weekly intervals gave complete control."

"The cyclamen mite is not so easily controlled by the same dusts or fumigations that are effective against the broad mite, not only because cyclamen mite is protected in crevices or distorted leaves, but because it is more resistant to some of the treatments. But both the cyclamen mite and the broad mite can be successfully controlled by the hot water treatment.

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## *Cyclamen Mite and Broad Mite*

### Dr. Smith's Method of THE HOT WATER TREATMENT

"The following suggestions may be helpful in successfully treating *Saintpaulias* that are infested with cyclamen or broad mites where the home owner lacks special equipment. However, the treatment should not be undertaken without an accurate thermometer that is easy to read and that is calibrated in degrees Fahrenheit. A glass chemical thermometer is available from most drug companies and chemical supply houses including the Gilman Drug Co., 927 Penna. Ave., Washington, D. C., and possibly other local firms.

If the plants are large and they are deeply set in the soil, removal of the surface layer to expose the crown will permit more ready penetration of heat. The plants are not removed from the pots for immersion in the water bath.

A small number of plants can be treated in a laundry tub or other vessel if deep enough to permit covering the plants with water. Fill the vessel with water to the desired depth and adjust the temperature to about 111° F. Fill another vessel with water adjusted to a temperature of about 120° F. This water will be poured into the tub as needed to maintain the desired treating temperature of 110° F.

Set the infested plants in the tub of water in an upright position and see that all foliage is below the surface. If several plants are to be treated they can be set in a wire basket or tray from certain cooking utensils or in a shallow slatted box. As the water cools pour in the warmer water to maintain the treating temperature at 110° F. for the full treating period. More hot water will be needed during the first part of the treating period or until the soil has been warmed. The tub should be provided with a cover, or covered with burlap to reduce the loss of heat during

the treatment. Remove the plants promptly after 15 minutes, tilt them to drain water out of the tops of pots, allow to drain and set out of direct sunlight for about 24 hours then return them to their usual position. Soil particles on the foliage may be rinsed off.

The temperature of the water during treatment should be carefully controlled since too warm water will injure the plants and too cool water will not kill the mites. The hot water should not be poured directly on the plants in the treating vessel but at one side. The water should be agitated by stirring with a paddle to maintain a uniform temperature throughout the vessel. If the treatment is made in a warm room with no cold drafts there will be less heat loss from the treating bath and less need for adding hot water.

It is advisable to make a preliminary trial run without plants in order to become familiar with the quantity of hot water needed to maintain the temperature and other procedures necessary to make the treatment a success.

Precautions should be taken to prevent re-infestation of treated plants. The mites can be picked up with the fingers when handling infested plants. The mites will move to adjacent plants if foliage touches. And be sure to treat the place where the infested violets were before, by drenching it with hot water, or steam, or with an oil emulsion spray, or it may be permitted to dry off for some time to allow the mites to die. Also scald the dish or saucer on which the plant rested.

Those who have small greenhouses can treat the infested plants by vapor heat. This treatment requires a specially constructed apparatus that heats the air to the desired temperature, which is 110° F., by means of electricity or steam and at the same time completely saturates it with moisture for 30 minutes."

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (Con'd.)

I am especially grateful for the African Violet Magazine, our Official Organ. The Editor, Mrs. Robert Wright, of Knoxville, Tennessee, her valiant staff of associate editors and news reporters, have done a magnificent job, so graciously, in the publication of the first five issues of the Magazine. Messages are constantly reaching us, particularly through the Homing Pigeon Department conducted by Mrs. Elsie Freed of Feasterville, Pennsylvania, expressing unanimous appreciation of the membership for the Magazine. Certainly it is a veritable storehouse of interesting and helpful information concerning the propagation and culture of African violets.

I am ever-so grateful for the magnificent group of officers who will assume responsibility for the future of the Society during next year, beginning January 1, 1949. Here they are President, Mrs. Robert Wright, 1st Vice Pres., Mrs. Arthur Radtke, 2nd Vice Pres., Mr. William Merkel, Recording Sec., Mrs. Martin Wangberg, Corresponding Sec., Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Treasurer, Mr. Boyce M. Edens. There is a great competence and the Society will grow and prosper with increased impetus under their leadership and guidance. I commend them to the entire membership and ask for them your heartiest cooperation.

I conclude with an expression of my everlasting gratitude to each one of the present officers, the Regional Vice Presidents and Committee Chairman who have served with me during the past two years. Many, many thanks for your great help and in the language of Tiny Tim, "God bless us everyone".

Cordially,  
Your President,  
Mrs. O. E. Kellar



# Meet Your District Director

(Helen Farnham)

When Mrs. Wright suggested the District Director of Region 1 introduce herself by means of a picture, perhaps showing a favorite African violet, consternation was evidenced. Where to get the violet for the picture?

Many and varied are the opinions as to the tractability of the African violet. I can only say that of all the house plants, including some tropicals and the temperamental Calla Lily Begonia, the African violets alone showed such resentment of the unaccustomed chilling received during our move to a new location, that they promptly curled up their toes via the crown rot route. This in spite of the fact that they were thoroughly healthy plants before the move. Which makes one wonder if temperature isn't quite important. However let me say in their favor that the tops are easily re-rooted if crown rot is detected in time. And no plant takes more kindly to a re-pot job.

As to a favorite variety — how to choose? The picture is of a Blue duPont, but the duPont Lavender Pink is just as beautiful, and what of the enchanting Ruffles? While constantly one hears whispers of new and better varieties still to be introduced.

African violets have been of interest to me ever since I discovered the well known Blue Boy many years ago, in a greenhouse. For years it was the only one obtainable, and it is still a best seller! However, increased hybridization is offering stiff competition.

Many fine articles have appeared in our magazine regarding culture, and two good books have been written describing varying methods — and they do vary. If your own method of growing is successful, why change? While some advocate a very plentiful supply of water, my own experience tells me to water with a light hand, and preferably from the bottom, using water of at least room temperature. When the plant has absorbed all the moisture it will take, it is not watered again until the top soil shows light and dry.

As with so many growers an east window is favored if the plants are grown in the house. In the greenhouse comparatively heavy shading seems called for. I note this same requirement in the successful growing of another member of the family, the lovely Episcia. Too much sun or too brilliant light leads to fading and curling leaves.

There seems to be quite a latitude of temperature in the higher range, but for me, at least, chilling is disastrous.



Everyone has a favorite potting soil, and I think it is rightly varied in different sections of the country where the soil itself varies. A good one for hereabouts consists of equal parts of good loam, leaf mold or peat moss and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  sand. To this may be added well rotted cow manure and some vermiculite if available.

Leaves have been rooted successfully in peat and sand, sand alone, vermiculite, water, and sometimes by inserting a leaf in a pocket of sand in a light soil mixture.

My own preference is for sand. Bottom heat, easily come by in the greenhouse, makes them fairly pop along.

With good rich potting soil plants will not need additional fertilizing for some time. Hyponex has proved satisfactory but there are many good formulas on the market.

The same may be said of insecticides. Mrs. Yoars speaks of N.N.O.R. Optox has proved to be excellent also.

Often we are told, "plants do so much better in the greenhouse". Not our African violets! They are just as satisfactory grown indoors. Easily propagated, almost constantly in bloom, the African violet earns its well deserved popularity.

Best Wishes for a Merry Xmas  
and a Happy, Prosperous  
New Year

STARR DAHLIA GARDENS

869 Confederate Ave. S. E.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

## Report of the Classification Committee

### Marine

Originated as a seedling from the cross Blue Boy X Ionantha. Plant is robust and upright in growth habit. Leaves are dark green, very quilted on top with transparent deep veins on the back with seldom any color at all on back of leaf. Leaves are rounded to ovate, edge dentate, tip of leaf obtuse and base slightly cordate. Petioles which reach a length of over 6" and  $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter are transparent green with a streak of wine running the length at certain seasons. Both the leaf and petiole are covered with very fine hairs. Flowers measure  $1\frac{1}{4}$  by 2", are produced in clusters of 5-8. A very robust grower which if given the room will make a huge plant. Color B. V. 4 around the tube.

### Mentor Boy

The very large plant is upright. Leaves are medium green with veins underneath rather reddish in young leaves. The mature leaf is large to 3 by 4", broadly ovate with a cordate base, slightly hairy, slightly quilted, and cupped downward slightly. The petioles grow to about 4" and are light green on bottom, reddish on top. an are light green on bottom, reddish on top. Flowers up to 2" in diameter are produced very freely in clusters of 5-8, well above the foliage. The two upper petals are long in comparison to normal flowers. Color B. V. 1.

### Mrs. Boles

There are some similarities between this and Marine. The plant is very large, slightly upright but sometimes flat, depending upon light and exposure. The young leaf is medium to light green; mature leaf is medium green with sometimes a slight amount of wine beneath. Leaves are hairy, most heavily quilted, very fluted and cupped upward slightly. Mature leaves measure  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by over 3". The petiole on mature leaves grows to about 4" and is pale green. The petioles of young leaves have a touch of purple on them. Large flowers ( $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $2\frac{1}{4}$ ") are produced in clusters of 4-8, well above the foliage at about an average rate. Color B. V. 4.

Mrs. Boles is probably a sport of Marine or Ionantha. Its foliage is similar to the duPont varieties but much heavier and with a leaf that is more pointed.

### Myrtle

The medium sized plant has a flat, compact, rather droopy method of growth. The young leaves are medium green with almost white backs and medium green veins. The mature leaves are usually richer, deeper green and sometimes very glossy. The ovate leaves have few hairs and are rather flat. Leaf size is about

2" by 3". Short petioles to 3" are medium green to almost white. Four to six rather small flowers ( $1\frac{1}{8}$ " in diameter) are produced freely just at the top of the foliage. Color B. V. 3.

### Neptune

The large plant is flat and droopy. The young leaves are quite cupped or spooned where the leaf joins the petiole. Leaves are very dark green, flushed wine underneath. Mature leaves are ovate have few hairs, are glossy, very quilted and cupped. Leaves are large, 3 by  $3\frac{1}{4}$ " or larger on healthy plants. The 3-4" petioles are deep rose purple. The quite round flowers are  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2" in diameter, in clusters of 4 usually, produced very freely, close to the foliage. Color B. V. 2 or B. V. 3.

### Norseman

The plant grows in a flat, tight rosette with older leaves tending to droop. The young leaves are glossier than old and are ovate. All leaves may or may not have a rosy tinge beneath. Mature leaves are medium green with the central portion directly cupped downward slightly at tip. Mature leaves measure  $2\frac{1}{4}$  by 3". Petioles are flushed slightly wine-red and grow to 4" or longer. Flowers  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " across are produced in clusters of 4-9, freely and well above the foliage. Color V. B. 4 or 5.

### Orchid Beauty

The most confused of all varieties. Other varieties which are the same or so similar as to not be distinct are Orchid Queen, Rosy Blue, Trilby, Orchid Red, Plum Pink, Plum, Mary Wac, Vivid Plum, Vivid, Betty Joe and perhaps many others.

The medium sized plant is upright. The ovate leaves are smooth and cupped downward. Mature leaves measure  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " or slightly larger. The petiole is flushed wine, especially on young leaves, and grows to about 3" in length. Flowers about  $1\frac{1}{8}$ " in diameter, in clusters of 4-7, are produced very freely well above the foliage. Color of flowers: top petals R. V. 3, bottom R. V. 4,

### Orchid Girl

Originated as a sport of Ulrey's Blue Girl. The large plant grows flat. The leaf is deep green with mature leaves thicker and more scalloped than young leaves. The cream blotch of color where the leaf joins the petiole that is present on Blue Girl is also a distinguishing character of this variety. Mature leaves are hairy, almost round and cupped downward, measuring  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter. The petiole is pale green with pronounced

Continued on Page 19



# Report of the Classification Committee

pink veins on top side and grows to about 4". Large flowers (1½ to 2") are produced very freely in clusters of 3-5, well above the foliage. Color V. 2.

Orchid Lady (See Amethyst)

Orchid Red (See Orchid Beauty)

Orchid Queen (See Orchid Beauty)

Ozark Skies (See Norseman)

Pansy Purple (See Mentor Boy) Not a distinct variety.

Pink Beauty

Patented. The first pink African violet. The large plant is upright and compact. The young leaf is dark green with flushed veins beneath. The mature leaf is somewhat lighter green without coloring in the veins. Young leaves are cordate at base with crenate margins. Old leaves are finely hairy, ovate with pointed tip and slightly cordate base but with almost smooth margin. Mature leaves measure 2¼ by 2¾". Petiole is flushed wine-red in young leaves; little or no coloring in old leaves. Petioles grow to about 4" long. Flowers about 1½" in diameter are produced freely in clusters of 7-8, well above the foliage. Color is amaranth pink, between V. R. 6 and R. 6.

Pink Beauty Supreme (See Amazon Pink)  
Amazon Pink was named first and they are not distinct from one another.

Pink Girl

Originated as a sport of Blue Girl. Patented. Plant grows in a cushion-type rosette. Leaves are medium green, similar to Blue Girl, with creamy marking at the apex of petiole and irregularly marked scallops on edges of leaves. It has a more compact and stiffer foliage than Blue Girl, but has the similar heartshaped leaves except when the irregular scallops alter it occasionally. Veins of leaf are transparent and back of leaf is pale. The glossy leaves have few hairs. Petioles are short, flushed red-purple. Four to seven large (1½-2") flowers are produced per long flower stalk. Flower color between V. R. 6 and R. 6. Flowers are generally cupped and sometimes have fluted edges.

Plum (See Orchid Beauty)

Plum Pink (See Orchid Beauty)

Plum Vivid (See Orchid Beauty)

Redhead

The large plant is more upright than flat. The deep green foliage is cordate, slightly hairy, shiny and slightly quilted. The margins of leaves are finely serrate. Mature leaves measure 2¾ by 3¾". The petiole is light green flushed with wine

growing to about 3" in length. The medium sized (1¾ by 1½") flowers are produced freely in clusters of 4-6, well above foliage. The color is R. V. 2 with the top petals slightly darker and darker spots just above the tube.

Rosy Blue (See Orchid Beauty)

Royal Sunset (See Viking)

Ruffles

Plant habit is more or less droopy. Foliage is hairy, narrow and pointed. The edge of leaves is toothed with a distinct fullness that gives a ruffled appearance. Underside of the leaves is quite rosy, deepening to almost a cabbage red in some areas. This variety has a characteristic of developing plantlets or offsets on the tip of a stem growing from the crown, pretty much as flowers are produced. These offsets may be used for propagation and will produce normal plants. Ruffles is distinct for its foliage. The blooms are quite small with an elongated lower petal. Frequently this variety sports a plant that bears flowers with additional petals. Flower color B. V. 5.

Sapphire

Originated as a seedling of Blue Boy X Ionantha. The large plant is bushy and upright. The foliage is small, ovate, hairy, dark green. Young leaves are slightly cordate and darker with evenly crenate margins. The margins of older leaves are almost smooth. Undersides of leaves may be dark flushed wine-red or under other conditions light green. The young leaves and petioles are more highly colored than old. Mature leaves measure 1 by 2¾". Petioles grow to about 5" on older leaves. Small flowers (1-1¼") are produced freely usually 4 in a cluster and down in foliage. Color in good light is B. V. 1.

Summer Skies

Lighter color and smaller leaves than Blue Boy. Originated as a seedling of Pink Beauty X Blue Boy. The medium sized plant is upright. Young leaves are medium green; older leaves are lighter with some netting in the small veins and the large veins are flushed slightly with wine. The moderately hairy leaves are ovate with cordate base and a tip that curves down-ward. Mature leaves measure 1¾ by 2¾". The short petiole (to 2¾") is flushed wine-red. Medium sized flowers (1½") are produced freely in clusters of 4 usually, well above the foliage. Color B. V. 5.

Supreme (See Viking)

Continued on Page 20

## Report of the Classification Committee

### Tinted Lady

Resembles *Ionantha* to some extent. The plant is large, semi-upright, resembling *Ionantha* in this respect. The young leaves are medium green, slightly tinted with pale wine beneath. Older leaves are medium green but usually not colored beneath. Mature leaves are hairy, quilted, fluted and slightly cupped upward. The leaves are ovate, with rather sharply tapered tips and measure  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$ ". The petioles of mature leaves are pale green with a tint of wine at times; they reach a length of 5". The medium sized flowers ( $1\frac{1}{4}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ " ) are produced freely, in clusters of 5-8, just at the top of the foliage. Color is white overlaid with a tint of light grey blue. Paler than V. 6.

### Topaz

Originated as a seedling of *Ionantha* X Blue Boy. The plant is large and grows in a loose flat rosette, if a single crown plant. Young leaves are deep green, cordate, distinctly crenate, with the undersides dark wine under some conditions and light green under others. The mature leaves are dark green but with little or no color beneath. Mature leaves are hairy, slightly quilted and ovate, measuring about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$ ". The petiole is flushed purple-red, growing to about 4" on mature leaves. Flowers are small ( $1\frac{1}{4}$ " or slightly wider), produced freely. Color B. V. 2 or V. 1.

### Trilby (See Orchid Beauty)

### Viking

The medium sized plant has a compact, flat habit of growth. Leaves are dark green with a light streak in center. The underside of the leaf is reddish purple. The light streak in center may become dark reddish from pigment underneath showing through. The outer edge of the leaf blade is lighter than central portion. Mature leaves are glossy, quilted and cupped upward slightly. They measure  $1\frac{1}{2}$  by  $2\frac{1}{4}$ ". Petioles are green flushed with purple. Flowers about 1" across, in clusters of 4-6, are freely produced just at the top of the foliage. Color V. 1.

### Vivid Plum (See Orchid Beauty)

### White Lady

The first white African violet. Patented. The plant is dwarf, compact and upright. Leaves are small, light green, with almost smooth margins. Mature leaves are ovate with transparent veins, the leaf measuring about  $2\frac{1}{4}$  by  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ". Petioles are short (about  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " ) and light green with no purple coloring. Flowers to about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " across are produced freely on short flower stems just at the top of foliage. Color is glistening white.

### #32

The medium large plant grows in a flat rosette. The medium green leaf is lightly tinged with red on the back. Leaf is very glossy, quilted, slightly troughed, deeply veined with an almost smooth edge. Mature leaves grow to about 2 by  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ". Petioles are to about 3" long. Clusters of four flowers  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter, are produced freely and well above the foliage. Color V. 4.

### Kewensis

The small plant is almost a miniature. It grows in a flat, tight rosette. The medium to light green leaves are quite thin with slightly serrate margins. They are very smooth, slightly quilted, and flat, growing to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  by 2" in size. The medium green petioles are thin and grow to 2" in length. Flowers are tiny, usually less than 1" in diameter, produced in clusters of 2 to 3, well above foliage. A good bloomer. Easily propagated. Shows a tendency to sucker freely. Color B. V. 2.

### Redland

Resembles amethyst in every respect except in color of flower which is R. V. 1. Distinct and worthwhile for its color.

### Sailor Boy

The medium sized plant is flat and tends to droop. Young leaves are cupped upward; old leaves are broadly heart shaped, medium green in color and growing to about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  by 2". The medium green petiole grows to  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " in length. Flowers are produced in clusters, freely above the foliage. Color between B. 6 and B. V. 6.

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Feasterville, Pennsylvania  
November 30, 1948

Dear Fellow Members,

As there is much to write about, please pardon the lack of preliminaries - thus allowing me to immediately assume the role of your "reporter".

With 'Ol Man Winter' here, our Saint-paulias require extra attention, in order to be beautiful during the long and severe weeks ahead. One little courtesy which they appreciate is the addition of charcoal to their soil mixture. Those of us who have not already formed this habit, might begin now. And, as you are desirous of learning details, I'll invite Elizabeth Wurster (Unit 7) to relate her experience and give instructions. Quote:

"Somewhere, I once read that Charcoal is a soil sweetener - so after losing a choice violet from Crown Rot, I decided to experiment. Now, this item is available at seed-houses, but I had no time to waste in ordering; therefore - consulted my husband. "Sure, I know how to make Charcoal - used to feed it to the hogs years ago." So I adapted myself to being a scholar and attentively listened. "Make a bonfire, burning hardwood until it becomes a mass of glowing embers; then pour several pails of cold water over it." However, I had no appropriate place to build an open fire, so went about the task of preparing one in my kitchen range. I used several hardwood sticks (oak) and placing them on top of the bed of hot coal I let them remain until they too, became a glowing mass - tho' still holding their stick form. Then, I carefully removed them with my ash shovel and immediately plunged them into a half filled pail of cold water. In a short while, I drained off the water and when the charcoal became dry, I placed these charred sticks in an old flat bottom pan and crushed them into tiny pellets, about the size of peas, tho' some crushed much finer. I tried my first Charcoal a year ago, and proudly confide that since, I have not lost a single violet because of Crown Rot. I advocate one cupful of Charcoal to a gallon of soil mixture."

Recently, Mrs. H. H. Rathbun (Unit 8) has mentioned that Chlorine in city water is a detriment to her flowers. Unfortunately, we do not all have pure water free from chemicals - but I do suggest that people having to use city water, draw it from tap in evening, thus allowing sediments to settle over night, carefully pouring off the water in the morning before using.



Mrs. W. T. Mears (Unit 28) is now proudly displaying seedlings, that are tantalizingly coming into bloom that were sown in March 1948. Quote the lady: "I have planted seed in sand and peat; Spaghnum moss and equal parts of sand and leaf-mold; tho' the latter I have found more successful. I just sow them in a flower pot, cover with glass until germination; and transplant quite early (sometimes having to lift them on the end of a nut pick)". Mrs. Mears believes cross pollenizing and growing one's own seed pods to be the most thrilling!

I also wish to thank Mrs. Arthur Rehbein (Unit 19) for the timely constructive criticism which follows: "The African Violet magazine is wonderful. But how I do wish someone would make up a binder so that our copies could be filed away for future reference." This is food for thought - can the proposal be put into action?

Now friends, 'tis time I conclude my letter. However, may I remind you of these timely gift suggestions? A subscription (or renewal of membership) to our National Society: contact: Mr. Boyce Edens: 2694 Lenox Rd. N.E.; Atlanta, Ga.; Saintpaulia stationery, obtainable at 31 Jefferson St., Haverhill, Mass.; Our National violet emblem pin: order from Florence Dolton: Somerton, Phila., Pa.; or

Continued on Page 26

# Starting African Violet Leaves in Chicken Feeders

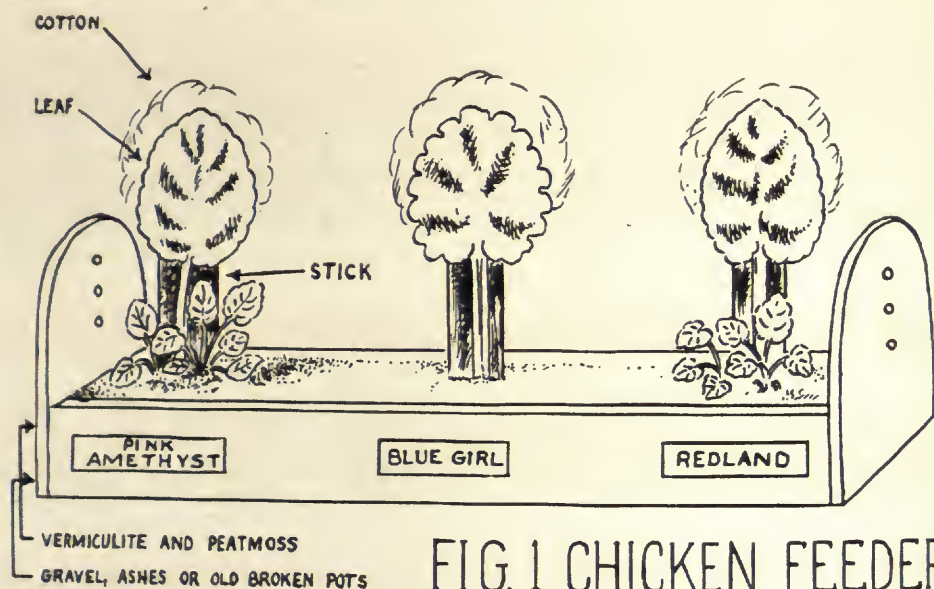


FIG. 2

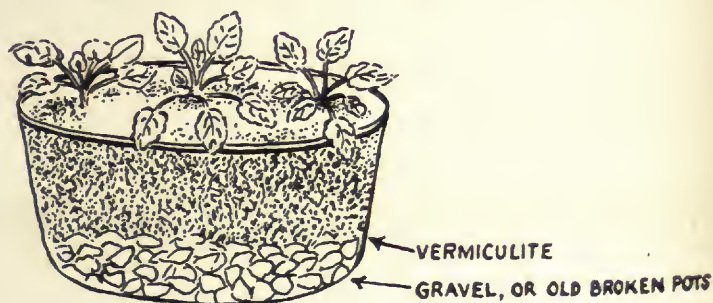
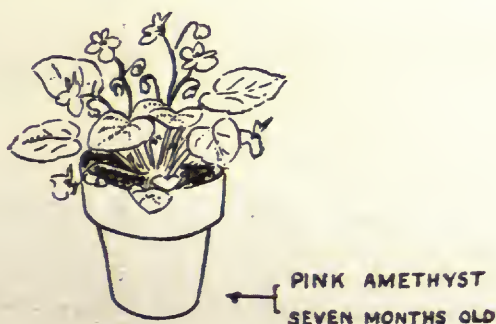


FIG. 3





# Starting African Violet Leaves in Chicken Feeders

Grace Lynn

Last fall I purchased two chicken feeders at a hardware store. They were each 36 inches long, 5 inches wide and 2½ inches deep. The handles were removed and the feeders painted an ivory on the outside to match the woodwork in the room. They were quite attractive. I placed them on a card table near a window where I planned to grow my new plants. Chicken feeders may also be used on window brackets just as you use glass shelves. Painting them to match your woodwork or color scheme. They may be made most unusual and decorative with a little ingenuity and labor.

Several ingredients were used in preparing the feeders for the leaves. In the bottom, gravel, ashes, and pieces of broken pot were placed to provide good artificial drainage, this being most necessary. Next, one part of Vermiculite and one part of peat moss was mixed in a deep pan. Hot water was poured over this, and it was allowed to stand over night. The next day it was well soaked and ready to use. The water was then squeezed out a hand full at a time, and it was lightly packed in the chicken feeder on top of the drainage layer of broken pot to about ¼ inch of the top. This ¼ inch space was allowed for good surface watering without it over flowing, and for digging in if I needed to dig later and did not want to spill the peat and vermiculite on the floor or table.

The chicken feeder was now ready to plant leaves in. I cut the stems of the leaves I wish to plant with a sharp razor blade. Then set them in place, and behind them use small sticks each with a fluff of cotton. This little cotton pillow seems to take the strain of supporting its weight off of the leaf and

aids them to grow more quickly. (Figure 1) Small in between sticks too should be carefully placed to hold the leaf firmly in place which in turn will give the tiny roots a good chance to grow without being crushed should the leaf wobble.

How interesting it is to watch the little leaves come up and grow so nicely and healthfully. Only two leaves have died since last fall.

Because the chicken feeder holds moisture it does not require watering as frequently. Leaves were watered each week with warm Hyponex water. (¼ teaspoon Hyponex to a quart of warm water).

When the little plants grew to be about 2 inches high I removed the larger clusters, and separated them very carefully with a sharp pointed pocket knife.

These small plants were then planted in a pot of well soaked Vermiculite (Figure 2) and watered each week with warm Hyponex water. They grew fine root systems and in a few weeks they were potted in sterilized soil. They grew off fast and bloomed quickly. (Figure 3).

The chicken feeder is very handy to use. It is so easy to carry, holds its moisture well and it leaves plenty of room on the table. I can plant about 14 to 16 leaves nicely in a 36 inch feeder.

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Season's Greetings to our friends.

WALTER W. McEVER

Saintpaulia Grower and Specialist  
GAINESVILLE, GA.

## SEASON'S GREETINGS

TO ALL

OUR VIOLET FRIENDS

TINARI FLORAL GARDENS

Saintpaulia Growers and Specialists  
BETHAYRES, PA.

# Violets for Disabled Veterans

Harvey Cox

This is another day of idle hours for thousands of veterans who because of the nature of their disability can no longer find recreation in the ordinary fields. Our Government has made an honest effort to bring hand craft to hands that falter, and new interests to minds that fret, but the job is not easy in that a great variety of hobbies strong in their appeal must be offered.

My experience leads me to believe that our bright eyed gal "Miss Blue Girl" is in many cases exactly what the doctor ordered. Or, perhaps "Doc" will prescribe that timid little gal "Miss Blushing Maiden". Hold your ire, wives and sweethearts, these girls are a couple of our African Violet friends. Hands that can put down a leaf, mix soil and pot the plantlets are busy hands. A mind at work on a cross pollination that would give us a bright red blossom is a busy mind. The days that follow are anxious days filled with anticipation waiting the first flower on those seedlings. Busy minds and busy hands do not fret and falter. We who read these columns know all too well how our violets can wrap us around their little petioles and enslave us to their slightest need. When hale and hearty folks go slightly crazy over collecting and growing African Violets is there any wonder people limited in the things they can do take their violets to heart.

How can we bring African Violets to the disabled veterans who love flowers



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and Specialists

DEPT. A BETHAYRES, PA.

and their culture whether they are in or out of Government Hospitals. There are, to my knowledge, two methods of approach. One is that employed by the Memphis and Shelby County Society. They have sponsored the organization of a violet club in a local Government Hospital and the Browns of Newman, Georgia have contributed a large variety of blooming plants. Men confined to our Government Hospitals are old hands at banding together in an effort to make their days more enjoyable. A small amount of encouragement and instruction from outside will result in an active African Violet Club.

Another method must be used to reach those disabled veterans who have been released from hospitals. Veterans organizations such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Veterans and Disabled American Veterans have Chaplains who keep in touch with disabled members. Local violet societies or individuals, for that matter, will find these Chaplains ready and willing to extend any aid that will bring new interests to their disabled members.

Only the high spots of Violets for Disabled Veterans have been touched. A program worth its salt will as it progresses present many and varied problems. These problems will be worked out as we go along.

It is my sincere hope the movement started in Tennessee will spread to all States. The chore is ours, the cause is worthy.

## Have You Tried This?

Louise Smouse

Why not try rooting leaves, planting and transplanting your Violets according to the signs of the Zodiac as many of our grandparents did in planting their gardens. They had fine gardens and they wouldn't plant their crops when the signs were not right. They believed in the signs in the almanac, and they worked by them. So it may be worth a trial by some of us today. A neighbor of mine who has been experimenting with her African Violets this way, and who has kept careful records believes in this too. Leaves that were taken off to root on the wrong date according to the almanac have rotted. Other leaves removed on the days marked as suitable have rooted quickly. Plants that were planted and transplanted have done the same when done on the days marked as suitable.

Will others who have had experience with planting by the signs of the Zodiac let us hear from them?



# CINCINNATI — 1949!

Mark Friday, April 29 and Saturday, April 30, 1949 as big days for our National Society. Come to Cincinnati and join the happy throng of violet people. Meet your friends from all over the country. Last year there were sixteen states and the District of Columbia represented. Come and represent your state.

The convention is to be held at the Cincinnati Club and the program planned so far includes such Topics as "Treatment of Diseases and Insect Pests Prevalent Among African Violets", "Symposium on Origination of New and Improved Varieties of African Violets", "Easiest and Most Practical Way to Produce Specimen Full-blooming Plants of African Violets", (this subject is to be presented by several of our well known members.)

We are planning an exhibit of the new and better varieties and you are hereby invited to exhibit your new varieties. There will be two divisions or classes in this exhibit, one for the commercial growers and one for the amateur. So groom your plants and bring your better seedlings and new varieties.

Prof. Alex Laurie of Ohio State University will be the speaker at our dinner meeting. Mr. F. F. Rockwell says of Prof. Laurie "he is internationally famous as an authority on soil and its fertility, plant feeding and related subjects which have to do with the practical phases of plant growth. A great deal of work and research has been done on African violets at Ohio State and we are indeed proud and pleased to have Prof. Laurie's promise to speak to us.

Of course there will be the annual meeting of the organization with its interesting and vital reports. I'm sure you won't want to miss this.

This is the tentative program as it has been planned so far. After all it is Your convention, so if you have any ideas or suggestions please send them along.

## SPRINGFIELD PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY

The following officers have been elected for the newly organized African Violet Society which has been formed in Springfield, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

President — Mrs. R. J. Schadewald  
Vice-Pres. — Mrs. J. Victor Turner  
Secretary — Mrs. Phillys Filing  
Treasurer — Mrs. Wallace K. Callum

The Memphis and Shelby County African Violet Society held their fall meeting September 1 in the National Bank of Commerce Lounge. A propagation table with full information was used. A leaf exchange is to be a feature of each meeting.

The Society is now propagating 50 more plants for patients at the Kennedy Veterans Hospital which has a club of 30 members. The Society also plans to purchase self-watering containers for plants of interested bed-ridden patients.

They also sponsor a society at the Lamar Veterans Hospital for T. B. Veterans. Twice a month they give instructions on the care of plants as well as sharing plants, leaves, soil and pots with the 33 members.

To a Home for Convalescents the club has presented 125 plants to the shut in patients who are not able to attend the meetings. They have also given honorary memberships to this group, and furnish a copy of the Violet Magazine for them to enjoy.

Mrs. W. C. Hope, president of the club, whose membership totals 150, announced the following new officers and committees; Mrs. Gerald Deering, parliamentarian; Mrs. H. B. May, chaplain; Miss Elsa Meister, historian; Mrs. G. C. Martin, program; Mrs. E. L. White, hospital; Mrs. John E. Hooper, shows and exhibits, Mrs. James T. Duthie, Membership.

The members of the Los Angeles Chapter of the African Violet Society elected the following permanent officers at the August 20th meeting. President, Mrs. Wanda Jones; president elect, Mrs. Carolyn Rector; second vice-president, Mrs. Mae Erhardt; secretary, Mrs. Sophia F. Schultz; treasurer, Miss Nelle Morris.

This group has grown to 40 members in the 5 months since it was organized. At the Southern California Show in Long Beach during August, the club had a 10 x 10 foot exhibit booth, attracting 15,000 visitors.

The Metropolitan African Violet Club which comprises the District of Columbia and the near ends of Virginia and Maryland elected the following officers for 1948.

Mrs. Warren E. J. Gottshall, President.  
Mrs. Martha Husted, Vice-President.  
Mrs. E. H. Toms, Sect. and Treas.

A spring show is being planned by the 15 members of this group with Mr. Warren Gottshall as General Show Chairman and Mrs. Husted as Publicity Chairman.

## AFRICAN VIOLET SHOW

The Barton Heights Garden Club of Richmond, Va., sponsored an African Violet Show at Battery Park Community House on October 2. There were 45 different varieties included in the 239 plants entered. A steady stream of visitors viewed the show which was staged on tables arranged step-like around the entire wall of the Club House and roped off to insure safety of the plants. More than 600 people representing every major city in Virginia and eight States (Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri, North Carolina and District of Columbia) visited the Club House during the hours of 2:00 to 9:00 P.M. when the show was open to the public.

Mrs. G. C. Phillips, Chairman of the show, and Mrs. George Hoss, Co-chairman and president of the Barton Heights Garden Club answered many questions for interested visitors as did the judges who were Mr. and Mrs. Warren E. J. Gottshall of Alexandria, Va. Mrs. L. R. Curry awarded prizes with the sweepstake prize going to Mrs. John T. Pangola. Mrs. R. S. Fogg won the prize for the best plant in the show with an *Ionantha*. Second best plant was *Orchid Beauty* owned by Mrs. John T. Pangola and third best was a *Blue Girl* owned by Mrs. John V. Morgan. Class winners were as follows:

Class 1 - Blue and purple - Mrs. Worth H. Carter

Class 2 - Lavender and lilac - Mrs. John T. Pangola

Class 3 - Red - Violet - Mrs. John T. Pangola

Class 4 - Pink - Mrs. W. A. Haynes

Class 5 - White - Mrs. V. R. Golderos

Class 6 - Doubles - Mrs. Mary Glass

Class 7 - Multiple crowns - Mrs. Hazel Flint

Continued From Page 21

give a lovely leather-bound "Guest Book", which may be purchased at most stationery stores for fond remembrances?

And . . . for the New Year, may we resolve to unite friendly spirits in our common interest, the African Violet, and appreciate God's many blessings! To all - A BEAUTIFUL and HAPPY SAVIOUR'S BIRTHDAY!

Ever yours,  
Elsie C. Freed  
(Conductress)

## LOS ANGELES CHAPTER EXHIBITS AT FOUR DAY SHOW

The Los Angeles Chapter of the African Violet Society of America not only surprised Southern California with the first real showing of African Violets (*Saintpaulias*) but everyone agreed that the interest in the Club Booth as well as the fifty foot table with competitive plants far exceeded any other exhibit. Some 15,000 people viewed this show and many returned again and again to look at the African Violets and to discuss them with the very capable members of the society who were a ways there to answer questions and tell of our wonderful society.

The Club Booth 10' x 10' was designed as the interior of a room with a large window at the end of the room and arranged in front of this window was an arrangement of thirty five varieties of African Violets. Much interest was manifest in a grouping of educational specimens of starting plants from leaf to blooming plants. The question that seemed to be advanced extensively was "Why do my plants not bloom?"

In the competitive division club members ran away with all supremacy awards except one. In the Novice division Mr. Harvey Cox of Long Beach took the Supremacy Trophy on his *Saintpaulia* "Sapphire", which was without doubt a wonderful specimen. He also took 2nd Supremacy Trophy in that division on an outstanding plant of *Amazon Pink*, being so new this plant attracted a great deal of interest. Mrs. Dollarhide took the Third Supremacy Trophy on her outstanding specimen of *Pink Beauty*. In the Amateur division, Mrs. Genevieve Marsh of San Pedro took the Supremacy award with her *Du Pont Lavender Pink Saintpaulia*, and Mrs. L. D. Thalheimer won the Third Supremacy on her *Multiple Crown* plant of *Lilac Lady*.

### Homing Pigeon Correction

Ethel Crotty and Arthur Chard (both members of Unit 4) have made worthy contributions in the form of suggesting saucers. Ethel uses plastic dishes that can be purchased in the 5 and 10¢ stores in assorted colors (price 5¢ each); while Arthur has been using for some time, Clay Pigeons. These are obtainable at sport stores in a quantity of 135 for only \$2.00. They are made of a combination of clay and pitch, coated black and are attractive. Of course they are fragile, but if treated with care are satisfactory for small potted plants. Both of these light weight containers are adapted for glass shelves.



# Your Hint Hunter

Phyllis Ferrall

With most of the hints I present as your hint hunter I will try if possible to prove whether they work for the average person. It is many times easier for commercial growers to do things with all their conveniences than it is for a homemaker who has to work for proper humidity and fight for space.

Trying to keep our plants beautiful for our family and friends to enjoy is most important! Keep your pots attractive so that others will admire their beauty. As a compliment to your plants copper pots do wonders to bring out the beauty of your blooms. A picture window with climbing vines makes a charming setting for your pots of Violets or frame your window with colored drapes or a dotted swiss ruffle used around the window frame, and held in place with thumb tacks of corresponding color. Use a little imagination and originality in decorating your windows so your husband will show your plants to his friends with real pride! It will be worth every effort you put forth —

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

If you have trouble with your leaves rotting when starting them in water try a few grains of wheat in the glass of water. The sugar in the wheat helps to prevent rotting.

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Do you have a plant that refuses to bloom no matter what you do to or for it? Put it in the electric refrigerator and leave exactly 4 minutes . . . no longer . . . and I am sure it will soon bloom. All it needs is a good shock! I have tried this and it works.

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

In a preceding magazine Rosa Peters told us of her method of starting leaves in deep lake sand. We went to Lake Michigan and brought some back with us. Of course I tried it! It actually starts leaves quicker than any method I have found to date. I had some nice little mouse ears in 28 days. So get out your magazine and read Rosa Peters' article again.

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Mums and Pelargoniums are often hosts to mealy bugs . . . N N O R is really wonderful for killing these pests. I had them on six of my largest plants. After isolating them I cleaned off the mealy bugs with alcohol swabs, and later sprayed them with N N O R following the directions given on the bottle. The quarantined

plants soon looked better than the plants in the house that didn't have mealy bugs . . . so I immediately proceeded to spray all of my plants!

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Do you have hot water on tap all the time, and a dish sprayer on your sink? Take your poor dusty plants and spray them thoroughly with luke warm water. Do this at night, and they will be entirely dry by morning. You will be overjoyed by the appearance of your lovely clean plants . . . and they will love it.

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Editors Note — Why not send your hints to Phyllis Ferrall, Route 5, Box 551, Battle Creek, Michigan. She will try them out and write them up.

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

Before she sets her plants Charlotte Hughes fills the pots she wants to use with soil and bone meal, then pours boiling water over them, and covers them up with a piece of carpet. "They stay hot for several hours!" Mrs. Hughes says. In this way the boiling water not only kills any worms present but sterilizes the soil and releases nitrogen to give the plants a boost to start off on.

## "YOUR HINT HUNTER"

"Having tried all sizes of pots I have decided that I like the smaller size best. I believe plants bloom more quickly and seem to have more bloom when grown first in smaller pots. Even mature plants do better for me if they are kept in smaller pots.

## YOUR HINT HUNTER

Mildew — a white mold like growth on top of the soil may be controlled by spraying the top of the soil lightly with fine sulphur dust.

### AFRICAN VIOLETS, BEGONIAS, TROPICAL SHADE PLANTS

N.N.O.R. Insecticide 6 oz. \$1.00 16 oz. \$2.15 Hyponex 7 oz. 50¢ 1 lb. \$1.00.

We ship anywhere April to November.

Visitors welcome, write for free list out after February 1.

### YOARS HOUSEPLANT NURSERY

Route 1  
Bunker Hill, Indiana

# A Christmas Message

By Frank Tinari

At this most Blessed Season of the year, when our hearts are humble and our thought for others prevails, it is well to meditate about our mutual interest and share our thoughts with you.

All of us who have walked along the Saintpaulia paths in the past can be most grateful for the plant which has given us great personal joy. We have watched its growth from its early day of introduction and have seen it rise today to great popularity. It has brought contented bliss, charm and beauty in homes everywhere. A plant most cherished especially by the window gardener, whose love for the soil and the joy that plant life brings is often limited to the small apartment window. To the one who is destined to waiting, more swiftly the time flies with an interesting collection of Saintpaulias to hurry along those moments of anxiety.

One experience remains with us above all others . . . that of one of our dear friends whose beautiful violets had been for years her greatest pride. Darkness overcame her and she was not to see again. So vividly has the memory of her Violets remained with her, that when now we visit her the first gesture is to lead us by the hand to the most favored spot, the violet window garden. "Aren't they blooming beautifully?" she will ask. We understand in silence how much they mean to her. An inward prayer of thanks that now the past memory of her violets give her joy is our greatest consolation.

Another friend who has devoted her life to hospital work came to us one day greatly troubled. She was in search of something besides medicine to give her patients. Together we packed a box of violet leaves for her to take away. She now reports, "The Violet bug has come to stay with our patients, their conversation is full of violet lore, and what a pleasant subject!"

"Have you ever watched a bud open?" someone asked one day. "Its like the smile of a sleeping child." On the faces of many people we have seen an expression of joyful excitement and pleasure when they walk into our violet houses, especially so in the early winter months, when a mass of bloom shouts a welcome to them.

However as much as we have enjoyed the Saintpaulia in the past its future is perhaps even more fascinating. Its marvelous range of color and leaf pattern, its ability to throw mutants, and the ever increasing knowledge of pollination and successful propagation by both the amateur and commercial grower holds a real interest and a challenge for all of us.

With the National Society in action, the forming of clubs in all sections of our country and the window gardeners growing interest, the plant we cherish marches forward.

May we wish to one and all a most blessed Merry Christmas!

*With Every Good Wish for Christmas*

*And the Coming Year*

*Alma Wright*

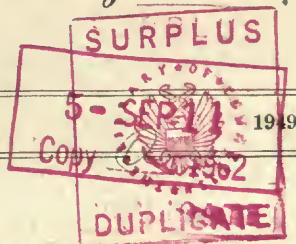
*Mary Parker*



# The African Violet Magazine

VOL. 2 NO. 3

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# The African Violet Magazine

Vol. 2 No. 3

## Staff

Alma Wright, Editor  
4030 McCalla Ave. Knoxville 15, Tenn.

Mary Parker, Co-Editor  
Harrill Hills, Knoxville 18, Tenn.

## Assistant Editors

Elsie Freed  
Boyce M. Edens  
Arthur Chard

## News Reporters —

Harriet F. Lawton,  
Maxine Wangberg,

Emily Hoden,  
Regina Gottshall  
Warren Gottshall,

## Officers

Mrs. Robert Wright, President  
4030 McCalla Avenue  
Knoxville 15, Tennessee.

Mrs. Arthur Radtke, 1st V.-Pres  
3334 Orion  
Cincinnati 13, Ohio.

Mr. William E. Merkel, 2nd V.-Pres.  
1238 Maple  
Mentor, Ohio.

Mrs. Martin Wangberg, Recording Sec.  
1920 West 3rd Street  
Perry, Iowa.

Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Corres. Sec.  
14225 McCracken Road  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. Warren E. J. Gottshall, Treasurer  
Box 901  
Alexandria, Virginia.

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Cover Design: Myrtle Radtke's attractive greenhouse.

## The Editor Says:

Dear Members: The African Violet magazine is not a scientific publication. Most of the articles appearing on its pages are based on ideas and experiences of the members who contribute them. The pages are open to all.

This issue contains two more good articles on foliage disorders. Pauline Wyland's thought stirring article in the December issue began what we hope will be a series of articles on this subject, thus in time, increasing our knowledge to the extent that . . . the often hasty and many times inaccurate diagnosis of every ailing saintpaulia will be slowed down, and cease to be only . . . "MITES". More careful consideration will be given as to the exact nature of the cause if possible, before treatment is started . . . or ended. So both for comparison and contrast, Harriet Lawton's photographs and article on over-watering of her plants is being published at the same time as the article and photographs on mites and the use of Sodium Selenate by Mrs. Neil C. Miller.

The June issue will be mailed June 1 to 10. It will contain as much convention information as space will allow. And a report of as many of the speeches as we can obtain. Pictures will be more plentiful.

. . . Several interesting articles are on the menu.

Your club reporter, Maxine Wangberg, 1929 West 3rd Street, Perry, Iowa, will be pleased to hear of your local society activities. Please send her your information well enough in advance so that she will have ample time to send it on to the editor for the next issue of the magazine. Remember . . . old reports do not have as much news value as something taking place nearer the time the magazine is published. Let us keep club news as much up to date as possible.

The members of the staff are working hard to improve the quality of the magazine with each issue. Your cooperation is solicited, your contributions are needed. Won't you share your experience with the other members of the society by writing an informative article on some phase of violet culture or describe some attractive way you are growing them?

Don't miss the Convention April 29 and 30.

See you in Cincinnati!

Sincerely,

Alma Wright

Advertising rates are \$3.00 per column inch.





## The President's Message

### A Plan Of Registration

"What's in a name?" — is a trite expression. But it is really a worth-while one for us because it poses an important question regarding the genus *Saintpaulia*, to which African Violet Society of America is committed to find a helpful answer. To be specific, the Society has promised to set up and operate a Plan of Registration, through which an accurate record can be kept of the names and related identifying description of the various species and varieties or African Violets now extant — both hybrids and mutants — and the many varieties to be originated in the future.

It should be stated at the very outset that, in the main, the registration of both present and future varieties will, of course, be made by their respective originators. In other words, the Society will set up and operate the machinery of registration, but registration itself will be made by the originators or their authorized representatives. This is their privilege and prerogative the Society must not usurp.

A Plan of Registration of this kind is a great undertaking, and like all similar undertakings, will not only require sufficient time to set up and get into action, but the very heartiest collaboration of the entire Membership of the Society in its operation. I say this because I am confident that the encouragement, backing, and combined sales effort of the Membership is essential to the continued operation of the Plan after it is set up.

The Plan of Registration your Executive Board and Board Directors approves will be carefully considered by both these governing groups of your Society when they meet during the Third Annual Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, April 29-30, 1949. A comprehensive outline of the Plan approved will be subsequently published in volume 2 Number 4 of *African Violet Magazine* that will be mailed to the Membership soon after June 10, 1949. It is my earnest hope that every member will read this outline carefully.

African Violet Society will operate the Plan of Registration as a part of its permanent program of services, through a standing committee to be known as the Committee On Registration. Mr. Boyce M. Edens, of Atlanta, Georgia, who heretofore has served the Society as Treasurer, has consented to be the Chairman of this Committee when it is set up. He will bring to the task of this Committee a fine experience in growing and observing many of the species and varieties of African Violets for the past several years, as well as a comparable experience in growing and observing hundreds of varieties of Tall Bearded Iris. It is fitting to mention, in this connection, that Mr. W. E. J. Gottshall of Alexandria, Virginia, has generously consented to serve as Treasurer of the Society at the resignation of Mr. Edens March 1, 1949. Both Mr. Gottshall, and his charming wife Regina are valued members of the Society and are equally interested in growing and hybridizing African Violets.

I have saved for the conclusion of this message my expression of the hope that the operation of the Plan of Registration by the Society will do much towards eliminating the confusion caused by the duplication of variety names and also help eliminate the duplication of varieties known under different names. Certainly this is the high purpose of the Society in setting up this service. It is our aim that this service will become invaluable to the entire Membership of the Society, to every other amateur and commercial grower of African Violets, and to every past and future originator of improved varieties of our favorite house plant.

Cordially,

Your President,

Alma Wright

## Come To Cincinnati!

### COME TO CINCINNATI!

If you plan to attend the third annual Convention at Cincinnati, Ohio, April 29 and 30, you've a treat lined-up which should assure everyone an outstanding meeting. The Convention headquarters is the beautiful and hospitable Cincinnati Club, Race at Eighth Street.

#### THE CONVENTION PROGRAM

Friday, April 29, 1949

9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

Registration of Members at Cincinnati Club. Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Chairman, Local Committee on Arrangements, in Charge.

12:30 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Luncheon Meeting.

Welcome by Mr. Boyce M. Edens -- Atlanta, Ga. Symposium on Origination of New and Improved Varieties of African Violets.

a. Through Processes of Hybridization and seeding — speaker Mr. William Merkel, Mentor, Ohio.

b. Through Processes of Mutation and subsequent selection — speaker Mr. R. A. Brown, Jr., Newnan, Ga.

Mr. Henry Peterson, Cincinnati, Ohio, presiding.

3:00 P.M.

Exhibit of Newer Varieties of African Violets.

Presentation by the growers. For members only. In suite adjoining Ballroom.

6:30 P.M.

Dinner Meeting of Members and Guests. Speaker - Dr. Alex Laurie, Head of Floriculture Department of Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Mrs. Robert O. Wright, President, Knoxville, Tennessee, presiding.

Showing of newly released, colored movie of points of interest in Cincinnati.

Saturday, April 30, 1949

8:00 A.M. to 9:30 A.M.

Breakfast Meeting.

Easiest and Most Practical Way to Produce Full-Blooming Specimen Plants of African Violets.

Speakers:

Mrs. Raymond Crotty, Huntington, W. Va.

Mr. H. G. Harvey, Dunwoody, Ga.

Mrs. Z. C. Layson, Maysville, Ky.

Mrs. Clarissa Harris, Los Angeles, Calif., presiding.

10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

Morning left open to special Committee Meetings and to visits to private collections of African Violets and points of interest in Cincinnati.

1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Luncheon Meeting.

Annual Business Meeting of the Membership of the Society. Reports from Officers and Committees of the Society and election of Officers for the ensuing year.

Mrs. Robert O. Wright, President, Knoxville, Tenn., presiding.

### MY HOBBY

By Nellie V. Naugel

Living alone in an apartment, I have always had lots of flowers. Since there are triple East windows and double West ones with wide sills, it is an ideal place for my hobby - - African Violets.

There are now seventeen varieties in my collection, half of them in pottery containers with no drainage. I have never read anything about this method of potting, but find that it gives fine results when the plants are watered lightly each morning with warm water and vitamins are added once a month.

In Summer windows are open. In East window a large tree provides late morning shade. Lowered blinds in West windows provide shade there, (with windows left partly open).

I keep ivies in water near the violets for added moisture, and in winter the room temperature is 70°.

After starting leaves in water, I pot them in vermiculite, later in mixture of vermiculite, peat and sand. When plants are an inch or more high, they are transferred to small containers, using sand, peat and black soil. Living in a small town, I have trouble getting inexpensive pots of the right size.

The varieties in my collection are:

Blue Boy, Blue Girl, Pink Beauty, Pink Girl, Pink Lady, Supreme, Dupont Purple, Dupont Pink, Redhead, Duchess, White Lady, Mary Wac, Neptune, Ionantha, Gorgeous, Tribby and Mentor Boy.

As my space is limited, about three outstanding new varieties should be enough to complete my collection.

I do love my violets. They are my first thought each morning, and they keep me from being lonely.

Being an amateur, the African Violet Magazine is most helpful and has brought much enjoyment.

One of the pleasures of African violet growing as a hobby is exchanging small plants with friends.





## *A Greenhouse For My Violets*

Maxine Wangberg

Upon leaving Cincinnati at the conclusion of the 1948 African Violet Convention, we were privileged to visit several private and commercial greenhouses. It was when we were back on the road home after a very pleasant morning at the Yoars Nursery in Bunkerhill, Ind. that my husband turned to me and asked the very startling and rather foolish question, "How would you like to have a greenhouse?" I had noticed that he was deep in conversation with Mr. Yoars, and found it was about how their new house was constructed, so we benefited greatly by their experience and suggestions.

Oral plans made in the car became plans and estimates on paper when we arrived home. My father, who is a retired businessman with a hobby of building, started with the construction almost at once.

All the windows, with the exception of a unit of three with movable sash, are permanently constructed of 20 x 40 inch glass used double with an air space between. These are weatherstripped on each inside edge, and caulked on the outside. The unit of three windows is equipped with screens for ventilation in summer and storm windows for protection in our Iowa winters.

Although it is only 8 x 12 feet in size, my bench room is almost doubled by the 10 x 20 inch double permanent glass panels

set half way between the height of the bench and the floor. My floor is cement from wall to wall, and underneath the bench sit my leaf propagating jars. Later, as my benches become completely lined, we will erect a second bench under the present one.

My bench is built in a U shape, 30" inches wide and a total running length of 24 feet. Galvanized tin trays were made to fit the bench and these were filled with sand. On the advice of our local florist, we are filling one with roofing gravel, using it 2 inches deep over a one inch layer of sphagnum moss. We were not experienced enough to provide a drain tube for our trays and great care has to be taken with the sand as there is danger of overwatering.

The inside is painted white and for a bit of glamour the ceiling is of new wood block with a fluorescent light with day light tubes.

The roof is shingled and the spaces between the glass on the sides are sided, Light green paint was stippled onto the outside of the glass, enabling us to be away for several days at a time without danger of the leaves burning. A door made of car siding and varnished clear, complete with a screen door, and a small oil heater for winter completes my hobby nook which was almost a necessity for my growing number of violets.

# *Variegateds*

Illustrated by Ross Hahn



Variegated White Lady



Variegated Blue Girl



# Variegateds

Phyllis Ferrall

I went on an "Information Please" hunt for opinions concerning variegation in African Violets. I was not too successful, but I did gather the following ideas.

Elsie Freed, when asked what she thought about variegated plants said, "I believe Variegateds are sports and that they cannot be depended upon to reproduce variegated plants".

"Mine is a matter of opinion only", said Mary Parker. "I don't really know why some plants produce variegated foliage. I have a plant with partly variegated foliage from which I have removed eight leaves, and seven of these leaves have produced variegated plantlets thus far. Alma Wright has often said to me that she believes variegation may possibly be a deficiency within the plant itself and that when this supposed deficiency is corrected, the plant will turn a normal green color again. I am not, however, in agreement with this idea and I believe that variegated plants are sports".

Carolyn Rector of California says. "I believe variegation is a recessive factor, and at present not fixed. Leaves from variegated plants may be all green. Take leaves of these green plants and root them. A small percentage of the resulting plants may be variegated. One grower says probably 10%, another says from 3% to 10%. These variegated leaves root more slowly and apparently do not produce many plants each".

Not too long ago I received a variegated Blue Girl leaf from Mabel Wilks. This leaf is producing a variegated plant. There are seven leaves on this plant at present and I am wondering how long it will remain variegated. I would welcome expressions of opinions by others. "Wiseth is the man who profits by the experience of others".

It appears to be the belief of many that albino plants die before they get to the blooming stage. I have an Orchid Beauty that has an albino plant growing in the pot beside the normal green plant. They are joined together at the root, and although they are both small plants, the crown with plain green foliage blooms beautifully, and it appears to be exceedingly healthy. Of course, if I divided the albino section away from the green crown, the albino plant would no doubt die. Also, I don't believe the albino section will ever bloom. Here again I welcome information from other sources.

I hope that I have written something that will be encouraging to those who would like to grow a variegated plant.

Won't you let me know if you have grown variegated plants and what your experience has been?

Variegated leaves root more slowly for me than green leaves. Don't get discouraged . . . try again. A lovely variegated plant is worth all the trouble it may seem.

Over 50 Distinct Varieties of

## African Violets

See Our Magnificent Specimen Plants—Glorious Blossoms

View our latest introductions:

"BEHNKE BOY" AND "FANTASY"

We do not ship, nevertheless we like to have you stop in on your visit to the Nation's Capital. If possible take a few Saint Paulias home with you as so many of our out-of-town visitors are doing.

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*Prescriptions for Saintpaulias*



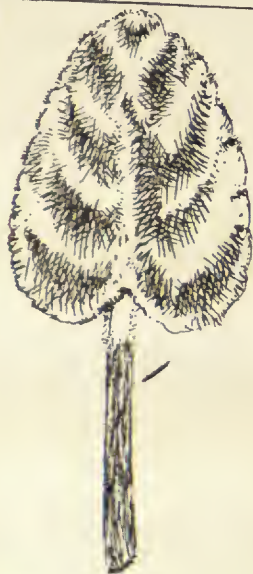
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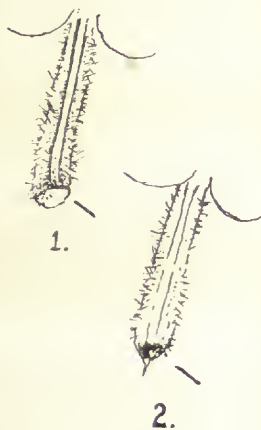
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D



E



F

Hard



# Prescriptions for Saintpaulias

(Illustrations by Arthur G. Chard)

(Q) If an African violet leaf is received in a wilted condition, and the petiole is healed over, how may the leaf be revived to its original state? (Illustration A) Should the end of the petiole be cut to facilitate better water absorption, or isn't this necessary? Would the wilted leaf absorb any water if the petiole was not recut? Is there any "life-giving" element added to the water to rejuvenate the leaf? How long should the petiole be if one plans to root it in a rooting medium other than water?

(A) By submersion of the entire petiole in cool water for a few days. It also helps to place the leaf blade in as horizontal position as possible. The end need not be recut if it has "healed" straight across; however, if the end has collapsed, as the illustration would indicate, it will be necessary to recut it and "healing" for another two or three hours will not aggravate the wilted condition of the leaf to any great extent. Vitamin B1 may be added to the water or even a hydroponic. It is something of an "accepted fact" that the shorter the petiole the sooner plantlets will appear. A petiole up to about an inch and a half is perhaps best. Old, nearly spent leaves are apt to go limp and usually cannot be saved. Young ones seldom do unless kept too long before placing in water or a rooting medium.

(Q) Is there any way an African Violet leaf can be saved when it has rotted in the middle as pictured? (Illustration B) What is the preventative for this rot? Would too high a humidity be the cause of this? Is it possible to root a petiole without a leaf?

(A) No. It would not be worth the effort to save a leaf so badly rotted. However, if the top half of the leaf is still good it can be cut off from the rotted part, healed, and planted - being sure not to keep it too wet at any time. Too high a humidity can cause it, also, if it was a leaf received thru the mails, it may be that the leaf blade was not kept dry in transit. There is not enough stored-up energy and vitality in a petiole without a leaf. As a preventative keep a leaf blade dry at all times, especially when exposed to light. If the rot is at the edge and not too large in extent the leaf should be removed from the water, or the rooting medium, allowed to become dry, then the bad portion should be cut off and the scar allowed to heal before being returned to the water, or water added to the rooting medium. Sometimes painting the rotted portion with dry Fermate will cause the rot to dry and stop its spreading.

(Q) When a leaf is damaged or partially cut or broken off, will it slow up rooting? Is the life of the leaf shortened by the fact that it is damaged? (Illustration C)

(A) No. Provided the cut or break has been allowed to heal completely. The "life" may be shortened but it will still produce

plants. Plants may also be produced at the edges of the cut or break in some instances but they are rather hard to remove and root due to the fact that they cannot be raised to a size large enough to permit them to store up enough vitality to last thru the rooting process.

(Q) What causes a petiole to rot? (Illustration D) Can one reroot the short petiole after the rotted part is cut off? Has the leaf lost any of its vigor as a result of the rotted petiole? What is the preventative of petioles rotting?

(A) Perhaps a variety of reasons - too strong a light may shine thru the water and burn the end; or if potted, the soil or rooting medium may be kept too moist until the end had healed; or, too much fertilizer may have been added which caused burning. The rot can be removed, the end allowed to dry and heal and then reset. It is not known whether the vitality of the leaf is affected but it probably is if the rot has developed quite some time after the leaf was removed and set for rooting. There is probably no strict preventative of petioles rotting. They may be dipped into "Fermate" or "Rootone" when cut - this may help but it is not an absolute preventative.

(Q) When a leaf has rooted in water, should it be allowed to form a small plant before it is planted into a rooting medium, (Illustration E) and if so, how big should the plant be? How deep in the soil medium should the small plant be inserted?

(A) It is not necessary for a leaf rooting in water to form a plantlet before potting - possibly it is better for it not to. If a small plant is allowed to form it may be planted either just below the surface in its entirety or just above the soil. If the latter, it should be kept out of light until the exposed petiole and plantlet is completely dry or it may burn or rot. Naturally a plantlet of any size (one with definite petioles already formed) must be planted above (or on) the soil. The leaf blade should be supported so that its weight does not pull the roots from the soil mixture.

(Q) Some advise letting a petiole scar before planting. (Illustration F) Is this absolutely necessary, is there any benefit derived from this act? Does letting the petiole scar over tend to aggravate the condition as in Illustration A?

(A) It may not be absolutely necessary, as many leaves are rooted without the cut being healed, but it is something of a preventative for rot. A "collapsed" end should not be confused with a "healed" end. The former will taper off to a hair, as in sketch 2. While a "scared" or healed end will remain straight and firm as in sketch 1. Healing will not cause or aggravate a limp condition if the leaf is a healthy one and not an old nearly spent leaf from the outside, or base of the crown.

# Collecting Then and Now

Martha Mears

I do not remember just how I came into possession of my first African Violet, but I do know that it started me on a hobby of which I have never grown tired over a period of years. Being an ardent gardener and a lover of all flowers, I was entranced with its lovely but periodic blue flowers. Like most every one at that time, I knew little of their culture, and to my dismay, when trying to find some literature on the growing of them, I found that there was very little written material to be found.

A friend taught me how to start new ones from leaf cuttings and it was then thought necessary to bind three leaves and stems together, facing each other, forming a sort of rosette and insert all the stems in soil. I had very little success with this, not knowing at the time that the secret of success was keeping them warm and moist.

At first I was very happy and proud of my blue one. I did not even know its name but it must have been Blue Boy. Then I began to hear rumors. Did I know that there were other colors? Light blue, pink, brown, yellow - and I was off on one of the most exciting and often disappointing hunts of my life. Hunts? Disappointments? Oh yes; for I, too, wasted much postage and effort and time trying to find that elusive yellow. East, West, North and South my letters of enquiry went; impatiently I watched the mail for a return letter, only to hear each time that it was in some other town where it had been seen. Even now the rumor is still passing around and, altho I am skeptical, I always hope that someday there will be one.

Gradually I began to add to my collection, Sailor Boy, Neptune, Mermaid, Commodore. I purchased several in a small town close by, including my first Ionantha. It grew into a large plant measuring fifteen inches across and my pride in it knew no bounds. By trial and error I found some of their likes and dislikes. It was then thought ruinous to let water touch the foliage so I carefully brushed each leaf with one of the very soft baby brushes which was useless to keep a baby's hair in order but very useful to remove dust from a delicate violet leaf. I learned better methods of propagation, grew more plants, and they thrived.

When I saw a colored picture of Blue Girl in a trade journal I thought that I could never wait to own one. Not being able to find one retail, we ordered some wholesale and let friends have part of them. They were just as lovely as advertised, which was a surprise.

When Pink Beauty was announced, it was the same desire all over again. I had lavender pink but this announcement said

clear pink. My husband was traveling at the time and he grew quite weary of visiting different flower shops in all the towns wherever he went asking for a pink African Violet. He received many different answers. "There is no such color". "We will have them later", while some of the clerks just thought he was plain crazy. Still, no pink violet. At last I saw Pink Beauty advertised for sale in a Northern state and altho I knew better, I ordered one in the middle of winter. When I brought it home from the express office my hands trembled as I hurriedly unwrapped it. Oh the disappointment; for it was all frozen. I ordered another one and the same fate met it. When Spring came we ordered wholesale again. I unpacked the box and stood all twenty-five of those plants with their lovely clear pink flowers in a row and marveled at their beauty. Twenty-five; and I had tried so hard to get just one.

In March 1943 Flower Grower, I answered a question in Queries and Answers regarding the source of African Violets, proudly stating that I had eleven varieties. Oh; what a mistake! The letters poured in! Would I sell? Would I swap? Did I know where you could get a yellow one? Wishing to share my treasures and knowing how hard they were to find I swapped leaves for iris, begonias, house plants or what have you.

During the war years I made a trip down to our state university and visited the greenhouse. There I purchased a six inch undivided plant of Viking. Travel was by bus then and with the large pot in one arm, an overnight bag, a purse and an umbrella in the other one, I elbowed my way through the crowd, shielded my violet from crushing, found a very much sought after seat and brought my new treasure safely home. I still have a part of the original plant.

Illness for a time put a stop to my collecting, altho I kept all the plants that I had. When I started collecting again what a bewildering surprise met me! New colors, new names in long, long lists. Advertisements by the dozen, of as many different varieties, soil, even a book on their culture. How fortunate we are today!

In the early spring of this year I received a list of commercial growers and saw Year's name at Bunkerhill, Ind. Since this was not far from my home, I decided to visit them and wrote to Mrs. Years telling her when to expect me. In great excitement I hurried out of bed on the day of my trip, went to the window to check the weather and all I could see was snow and ice everywhere, piled in deep drifts. I waited until noon when the snow ploughs

continued on page 36



I have found that it is very easy to get rid of the mites by the use of crude naphthalene flakes. Do not confuse the crude flakes with the refined or with household moth-balls. The crude is much more effective for this purpose, is cheaper, and I have found it safe to use in the house without injury to the plant.

Simply place a teaspoonful of crude naphthalene in the center of the saucer you customarily have under your plant, set the pot down in the saucer with the drainage hole directly over the flakes. Usually a slight twist and downward pressure is necessary to seat the pot firmly. Do this at your regular watering time and fill the saucer with water, and keep it full for about 24 hours.

A portion of the flakes are dissolved and drawn up into the soil. After 24 hours take up the pot, wash the outside with warm water, carefully drain the saucer, leaving the flakes that adhere to the bottom of the saucer.

The plant seems to absorb the fumes, and I have found that the mites just won't stay. Whether they die or not, or just go, I don't know, but unless the plant is too far gone to begin with, the crude naphthalene has done the trick. I have always used the un-glazed pots; whether or not the above treatment will work with glazed pots, others will have to determine.

This entire treatment can be done in your home without moving your plant from your favorite position. The odor disappears as soon as you run the water into the saucer. The entire operation is simple.

I have found no ill effects in this treatment, in fact about twice a year I have given it to all my plants as a preventative, and also on new stock just received. Any other worms, bugs, or what-nots in the soil will succumb to this treatment. Several years ago I did have another pest similar to or the same as Helen Wilson describes in her new book as "Springtails". The "swarms" she describes disappeared after one treatment, and none have appeared since. I have often wondered if this treatment would not be effective against nematodes.

Getting down to the sad part:—Crude Naphthalene Flakes, at least here in San Francisco, have disappeared from the nursery stocks. I do not know if this situation is true in the rest of the States or not. Nurseries here previously carried the flakes as packaged by the Portland Seed Company of Portland, Oregon. I wrote to this company asking where I could find the product, and they told me that the raw material was scarce, but that they were trying to find

more and would come back on the market with the product as soon as possible.

Perhaps your own nursery supply house has some on hand or can tell you where the crude can be secured. If not, I would suggest that you write the Portland Seed Company for details on future distribution. It is my understanding that the crude naphthalene is one of the by-products of the manufacture of gas from coal. Due to the current modern use of natural gas in many parts of the country, the shortage is understandable.

### INFORMATION ! !

The following members cannot be located by these present addresses. Please help us find them.

Mrs. G. E. Lomas  
2550 West 39th Ave.  
Vancouver B. C. Canada.

Mrs. Ada E. Fyfe  
Center Road, Port Credit  
Ontario, Canada

Mrs. Ruth Pardee  
5310 Glenway Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Mrs. M. D. Slade  
7759 N. W. 16th Ave.  
Miami, Florida

Mrs. Henry Schnarr  
Mount Vernon, Ill.

Mrs. M. R. Deland  
4536 North Racine  
Chicago 40, Ill.

Mrs. Fredrick D. Lewis  
Wesleyville, Va.

### AFRICAN VIOLETS, BEGONIAS, TROPICAL SHADE PLANTS

N.N.O.R. Insecticide 6 oz. \$1.00 16 oz. \$2.15 Hyponex 7 oz. 50¢ 1 lb. \$1.00.

We ship anywhere April to November.

Visitors welcome, write for free list out after February 1.

### YOARS HOUSEPLANT NURSERY

Route 1  
Bunker Hill, Indiana

## SPRING SHOW IN ALEXANDRIA

The Metropolitan Area African Violet Club held their December meeting at the Y. W. C. A. in Alexandria, Va. After a short business meeting and election of officers, the meeting was closed and the members enjoyed a Christmas party. Six new members were welcomed. Gifts were exchanged, names having been drawn at the November meeting. The new members received African Violets to add to their collections, the plants being donated by the club members.

The following officers were elected for 1949,

President, Mrs. Warren Gottshall  
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Martha Husted  
Secretary, Mrs. Eunice Toms  
Treasurer, Mrs. George Shelton

The Club will stage its second annual show for benefit of the Cancer Fund on May 22nd, 1949. Historic Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria, Virginia will be the setting for the exhibit also held in conjunction with the City's Bicentennial Celebration.

Your patronage of this worth-while cause will be appreciated, and in addition to the competitive show, arrangements are being made for an exhibit of seedlings and new plants originating in the Metropolitan District of Washington, D. C.

The following committee chairman have been appointed:

Gen. Show Chairman, Mr. Warren Gottshall  
Publicity, Mrs. Martin Green  
Classification, Mrs. E. Fonbuena  
Judging & Hospitality, Mrs. W. W. LaMar  
Properties & Photography, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. DeWitt  
Finance, Mrs. Eunice Toms

## ROCHESTER -- SOCIETY ORGANIZED

The African Violet Society of Rochester, New York and Vicinities organized in the fall and elected the following officers,

President  
Mr. Floyd L. Johnson, Spencerport, N. Y.  
1st Vice-President  
Mrs. Leslie Aldridge, Canandaigua, N. Y.  
2nd Vice-President  
Mrs. Robert I. Slocumb, Rochester, N. Y.  
Secretary  
Mrs. Harry V. Thompson, Rochester, N. Y.  
Treasurer  
Mr. John R. Gent, Webster, N.Y.

This group, the second largest to date, has a membership of 82, and hold their meetings in the Rochester public library.

## FLINT SOCIETY HAS FIVE CHAPTERS

On November 5, 1948 the Flint African Violet Society consisting of five chapters, Ionantha, Neptune, Amethyst, Triby and Amarantha, entertained the members of McFarlan Home of Flint Michigan. This being World-wide Prayer day Mrs. Sherman White opened the program with a prayer for world peace. Mrs. James Atkins gave a brief history of the five chapters of the Society and what their study consisted of and also the clubs aim to bring a little sunshine to the hearts of many others. Mrs. C. L. Larson gave a demonstration of planting leaves in Zonalite and presented each member of the home with a leaf and materials in which to start them. A general discussion followed with questions and answers about Violets.

Each person present, guests and members, introduced themselves by standing and giving their name. The poem, A Tree of Friendship, by Ann Campbell was read by Mrs. Atkins.

Mrs. Larson presented a blooming Violet to the eldest and youngest guest of the Home, Mrs. Alice Watkin being the youngest, Mrs. Hannah German being the eldest present. The eldest guest, Mrs. Amy Archer at the young age of ninety-five having gone out to church services, a plant was left for her also.

Mrs. Herbert Beavis and Mrs. Oscar Strand presented a plant to each member of the home, consisting of twenty varieties of Violets. Each plant had a red and white jacket tied with a white satin ribbon. Two Matrons were also recipients of African Violet plants.

Mrs. Atkins and Mrs. Wilbur Borton presided at the silver tea service, one at each end of a huge table which was covered with white linen centered with white mums. Tiny pastel baskets filled with bonbons was a gift to each member along with fancy cookies baked by members of the Flint African Violet Society.

Following tea the club members were taken on a tour through the lovely Home.

## NEW SOCIETY IN COLORADO

The Colorado African Violet Society was organized on Feb. 25, 1948, with Mr. L. G. Kneeland elected president; Mrs. A. D. Meyers, Vice-Pres.; and Mrs. Theodore M. Greer, Secretary. Meetings are held in the homes on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The members are experimenting extensively with leaf and seed propagation, pollinating seeds, potting mixtures and systematic fertilizing methods. This enthusiastic group includes members from Denver, Golden, Aurora, and Littleton, Colorado, and is the first group to be organized in this area.



## RICHMOND SOCIETY

The African Violet Society of Richmond, Indiana held a public meeting on September 24, 1948 at 1:30 P.M. at Morton Center Auditorium. Between 200 and 300 people were in attendance to hear Mr. Henry Peterson of Peterson & Son Greenhouse, Cincinnati, Ohio speak on African Violets and show slides. Mr. Peterson flew his own plane which enabled him to bring many new varieties as well as the old well established ones for the club members and guests to view and purchase. Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Regional director, was also in attendance.

On October 29, 1948 the third African Violet show sponsored by the Richmond Society was held from 12 noon to 5 P.M. at Morton Center Lounge, Richmond. There were 174 violets entered. Ribbons and cash awards were given, the money for prizes being a donation of Joseph H. Hill of Hill's Roses. The good attendance and many out of town visitors prove the growing interest in African Violets in this area.

## TRENTON SOCIETY OFFICERS

The African Violet Society of New Jersey in Trenton announces the election of the following,

President, Mrs. Elizabeth Lawton  
Vice-Pres. & Treas., Mrs. L. P. Reichel  
Corresp. Sect., Mrs. A. Newkirk  
Recording Sect., Mrs. R. Staut  
Reporter, Mrs. Knolls  
Historian, Mrs. M. Thoburn

## DELAWARE COUNTY, PENN. SHOW

The first show given by the African Violet Society of Delaware County will be held at the Community Methodist Church in Springfield, Delaware County, Pennsylvania on April 9, 1949 from 1 P. M. until 9 P.M.

In addition to the show, there will be a commercial exhibit, at which time a number of new plants will be displayed.

Not all back issues of the magazine are now in print.

Requests for these must be made on penny post cards and you will be notified which ones are available.

Do not send money until you are notified.

## OMAHA CLUB

The Omaha African Violet Club, Inc. held their first annual business meeting on November 11, 1948 at the Joslyn Memorial.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year,  
President, Mrs. Robert C. Adams  
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Clarence Anderson  
Secretary, Mrs. Elmer C. Munson  
Treasurer, Mrs. Albert Norgren

Following the business meeting, movies of the First Midwest African Violet Exhibit, sponsored by the Omaha club on April 24 and 25, 1948, which were taken by Mrs. J. W. Hofmann, were shown.

Mrs. Hofmann, the retiring president, then took several pictures at this meeting.

Tea was served from a table beautifully appointed with a lace cloth and a centerpiece of yellow and white mums and yellow candles. Mrs. Woodruff presided at the tea service.

On November 30th the Omaha club celebrated their first birthday with a pot luck luncheon at the Joslyn Memorial, followed by a tour of the homes to see the many beautiful violets on display.

## CHATTANOOGA SHOW

Mrs. W. W. Cox, president of the Chattanooga African Violet Society, was awarded grand prize for the greatest number of points in the society's fall flower show, held at the YWCA Green Room. She also won the sweepstakes award for arrangement.

Sweepstakes award for horticultural entries went to Mrs. Rowe Burgner.

Mrs. Charles Guedron's Bride's Table arrangement was judged "Queen of the Show".

Doctor's Library Table, arranged by Mrs. W. H. Nichols, and Occupational Therapy Exhibit, arranged by Arno Burnett, were noncompetitive exhibits.

Mrs. Horace Humphries had a special exhibit of 50 plants, which included 10 different varieties. An outstanding Lamp Terrarium was arranged by Mrs. Ferrell Hill.

A special feature in the Hospital Section was a window garden arranged by Mesdames M. D. Chapman, Horace Humphries and W. C. Traylor.

Mrs. W. C. Humphries was general chairman of the show.



This is the four year old Blue Boy after being repotted. It is a beautiful plant as you can see.

## *New Life for Old Plants*

Ruth Walsh

If you have an old violet you do not want to discard for sentimental reasons or otherwise, try doing what I did for my old Blue Boy.

This plant was the first Saintpaulia given to me here in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, four years ago and the gift of it started me raising African Violets. As it aged, it's stalk become twisted and gnarled, and the whole plant was hanging on the rim of the pot. The blossoms, though just as profuse, were somewhat smaller.

I decided to do something — even something drastic, if necessary as the plant had become so unsightly, I couldn't keep it as it was!

The stalk was cut off about 1½ inches below the crown, and the large outer leaves were removed, leaving a small well formed

crown. The buds and flowers were all pinched out.

Then the stalk of this small crown was put in water in a small glass. It looked just like an old fashioned nose-gay when I had put a lace paper doily under the bottom row of leaves. I used it on our coffee table all the time it was rooting.

In about two weeks a great quantity of fine roots had begun to grow from the stalk, especially where the old leaves had been removed.

I potted it the following week in fine sifted woods soil in a three inch pot. Now two months later I have a lovely symmetrical plant covered with blossoms and new life has certainly been given to an old Violet!





An Orchid Beauty crown being re-rooted and used as a decoration on the coffee table. The flowers are verbenas, but I have used many different kinds; the crown is so lovely and green all flowers look well with it.

# The African Violet Magazine

## Success Story

Ada Magill

As weekend guest over Labor Day, my cousin fairly drooled over my African Violet plants. Repeatedly she said, "How I wish I could grow Violets like yours!"

I had given her leaves and small plants several years ago. One by one the leaves rotted and the plants died. Each time there was a funeral she vowed never to try it again, saying "Stoker heat just does not agree with violets."

Again I wished upon her an Amethyst plant and leaves of Blue Bcy, Bicolor, Norseman and Orchid Beauty along with an African Violet Magazine, and urged her to join an African Violet Pigeon.

"You know, when I started growing Violets, four years ago, I learned the hard way too. A beautiful plant in a six inch pot was given me upon my return from the hospital. It was covered with blossoms and did bloom for the space of several months. Then — oh, then, the leaves began to get soft and transparent, until one by one there was no more plant. That happened to any number of plants that were given to me. Then four years ago this fall Mother came home with a Blue Boy in a two inch pot and said, "I bought this today and if it doesn't live and bloom I will keep on buying them till one does." The threat must have frightened the little fellow because it grew and had only one blossom on it up to March. It had developed two crowns. So after reading Helen Van Pelt Wilson's folder put out by one of the current magazines, I went to work with fear and trembling fingers to repot an African Violet for the first time. For a few days it looked pretty limp but by the end of a week it was a real joy to see the leaves take on a fresh crisp look again. That experience gave me courage, and, as soon as the plants were well established, I plucked a few leaves and tried my hand at propagation. However, when the parent plants were about a year and a half old they gradually turned up their toes and no matter what I did they would not be revived. As you see I have continued to collect different varieties and learn by trial and error until the books by Helen Van Pelt Wilson, Mrs. Odom and Mr. Lindsey came out. I have read everything I could get my hands on about African Violets.

The African Violet Magazine is my pet, I can hardly wait from one issue to the next and never fail to read every word of it. I have profited by any number of experiences writers for it have related. After  
continued at bottom of next column

## YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall

Route 5 — Box 551

Battle Creek, Mich.

Your many letters commencing us on the new "Hint Hunt" column are heart-warming. Thank you for all your kindness and words of encouragement. Keep the hints coming in, as this is your column to share with all our friends.

I have been reading about and trying artificial lighting.

I had several hundred tiny plants in an unheated outside building. Having no room in my living quarters for them, and of necessity getting them some warmth, I took them to the basement. I placed them on card tables and suspended 60 watt electric light extensions, 12 inches above the plants. The foliage is much greener and plants sturdier. I now take any puny plant down there to perk it up. Even my babies in vermiculite are there. I keep lights on about ten hours daily. This method is used in only a fairly warm basement. Try yellow or orange bulb.

A hint from Mrs. A. G. White, Asheville, N. C., "Whenever my African Violets start growing downward as they are inclined to do in some varieties, I place them beneath an eastern or southern window on a low stand and let the light pull the leaves upward. In two or three weeks the leaves are up and the plant has a much nicer appearance. It also eliminates losing the many leaves which rot when they rest on the rim of the pot".

Mrs. Annie Astalski, Clarence, N. Y. sends this hint. "In rooting leaves in water put a small stone in bottom of container, the leaf will root sooner.

I have purchased some lovely little birds and placed among my violets on the shelves. The effect is well worth while.

Mary Mullarky, Huntington, W. Va. tells us rain water or melted snow is much better to root leaves as it does not contain the chemicals most city water contains.

I have been most successful in using tiny baby food cans, filled with vermiculite for rooting leaves in record time. Sixteen days after placing leaf in vermiculite the tiny mouse-ears appeared.

all, it is only by experience that we have the courage to try again and again. So if you fail once don't give up but TRY! TRY! AGAIN. Then if you really want the bug to bite you attend an African Violet Convention. I did last May at Cincinnati and came home with such an added abundance of enthusiasm my husband said he would have to build an addition to the house. Don't give up. You can grow them too."



# Mite, Water Bath and Selenate

Mrs. Neil C. Miller

(With a little help, here and there, from her husband.)

In the spring of 1947 I had a nice collection of about twenty varieties of Saint-paulias with many more coming on in various stages of development, propagated both from seeds and cuttings. I saw several varieties that I wanted listed by a well known nursery. I ordered them. When the shipment arrived in April one plant didn't look right. It had no growing crown; no small leaves in the center; the one flower stalk was only an inch long and curled back on itself; the single blossom was small, misshapen and blotched; the leaf petioles were covered with brownish hair; and the leaves were limp and lying flat.

Within three months I came to know these as typical signs of advanced mite injury, but at that time all I knew was that the plant didn't look right. I wanted to throw it out but my husband insisted that such a well known nursery would not send out diseased plants, and that whatever was wrong with it was only temporary or was the result of the trip through the mails. So I placed it with my other plants on my kitchen window sill.

What a mistake that was! No matter from what source I secure a plant now it stays by itself, out of all contact with any other plants, for several weeks, so that I have an opportunity to observe it and decide whether it needs to be selenated.

During May and June there occurred a series of circumstances that kept me from giving my plants adequate attention: I was sick for several weeks; my little boy had a tonsillectomy, lost a lot of blood, and had to be nursed back to health; and I had extra cooking to do (ironically enough, for men who were building a greenhouse for my African Violets). During that time I saw my plants getting sicker and sicker but I just couldn't do anything about it. It was in early July before I could give my violets the attention they needed and by that time they were a sorry mess. The original plant from the nursery was dead, and about twenty plants were as far advanced as the nursery plant had been when received, so I threw them out. About fifty more plants were in some stage or other of collapse, and day by day other plants were developing symptoms.

I think it would be well at this point to describe the various stages in the development of mite injury so it will not be necessary to do it step by step later, although at this point in my actual narrative I had not yet even heard of cyclamen mite.

a. If the plant is flowering the first indication of trouble will probably be that flower stems will be very short, sometimes not even getting out of the crown leaves. The blossoms will be small, frequently will not open fully,

or some petals won't open at all, and the flowers will also be off-color or blotched. Blooming will soon cease.

b. The next stage (and it may occur almost at the same time as the blossom evidence) is the deterioration of the leaves and crown of the plant. New leaves growing in the crown become misshapen, one side of the leaf sometimes being much smaller than the other. Frequently the leaves will be thickened and have rough and irregular edges. Leaves become very brittle. As successive leaves appear in the crown they become smaller and smaller. Leaves and petioles become shorter and shorter, petioles finally becoming practically non-existent. So the crown becomes a mass of malformed small leaves, lose the normal green color and turn a sickly greenish gray, the grayness of which is enhanced by the thick growth of hairs all over the leaves and petioles. The leaves frequently cup either upwards or downwards. The grayish color is actually a fore-runner of death as it increases until the leaves completely wither and dry up.

c. Before the crown dies completely the older, larger leaves collapse onto the sides of the pot, and become wilted and dull in appearance. Hair on the petioles frequently becomes brown in color.

d. The final appearance of a badly infested plant (if you can stand to have it around that long) is a plant without blossoms or blossom stems, a center having only a few gray husks of leaves remaining and entirely devoid of any green portions or signs of growth, and a few wilted leaves at the end of hairy brown petioles hanging limply and forlornly over the edge of the pot.

I had plants in all of the above stages by the first of July.

I had never heard of cyclamen mite at that time, so had no idea what the difficulty was. I had a copy of Helen Van Pelt Wilson's booklet on African Violets (published by Ladies Home Journal in 1945, — her book "African Violets" had not yet been published) and I got my first inkling of what the trouble was from her description of cyclamen mite injury. The booklet wasn't very helpful in suggesting a cure, as it said the mites worked inside the terminal buds and were out of reach of sprays. The only method of control offered was to destroy infested plants. I had already done plenty of that and was faced with the likelihood of having to do much more.

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## Mite, Water Bath and Selenate

But at least Miss Wilson's booklet had given me some idea what the difficulty might be. I wrapped a plant up (very carefully, I thought) and sent it to the United States Department of Agriculture Research Station at Beltsville, Maryland, and sent with it a letter explaining my suspicions of cyclamen mite. The reply came back that the plant had been so badly smashed in transit that diagnosis was impossible. But from my description of the trouble and what few leaves he had been able to salvage, Dr. Floyd F. Smith, who answered, said that the plant injury appeared to be that of cyclamen mite. He suggested the water bath treatment and enclosed a copy of an article written by him which had appeared in the Florists Review for Feb. 20, 1936, "Major Ills of Saintpaulias Evidenced in Condition of Their Foliage", which gave detailed instructions for the water bath treatment.

Incidentally, the article treats of two other ills of Saintpaulias besides cyclamen mite: ring spot and stunt. The cause of ring spot apparently had not been determined then, but the author rightly suggests that the symptoms could be avoided by cultural practices. There is a long description of stunt which visibly affects plants much like mite damage. I wonder if stunt has been entirely overcome since 1936, I have never heard of stunt as a disease (in contradistinction to stunting as a result of improper treatment) anywhere but in Dr. Smith's article.

The basic directions for the water bath treatment are simple: Immerse the plant, pot and all, in water at 110°F. for fifteen minutes. However a number of supplementary instructions must also be included:

- a. Provide some way of adding warmer water so that the temperature is held at 110°F.
- b. Keep the water in motion with a paddle or some other device.
- c. Open the crowns of plants to release air bubbles.
- d. Be sure every part of the plant is immersed, that not even one leaf tip reaches above the surface of the water.
- e. Skim off any debris (blossoms, leaves, compost residues from the potting soil, etc.) that may float to the top. Do this as soon as the debris appears, but be particularly sure that there is none on the surface when the plant is removed. (Mites could cling to the debris and be picked up as the plant is removed.)
- f. Wash your hands carefully with soap and hot water before removing the plant (to kill any mites on your hands).



g. After treating the plant place it where it can not be reinfected from other plants, or from watering saucers, trays, etc.

h. Be extremely careful that you do not re-infest the plants by carrying mites on your hands from infested to treated plants.

i. Keep plants out of direct sunlight for twenty-four hours.

Immediately upon receipt of the instructions I set to work to treat my plants. I carried out the operation in my kitchen sink. I used a dairy thermometer and kept the temperature between 110.0°F. and 110.5°F. To insure the accuracy of the thermometer my husband checked it against a Bureau of Standards Certified Thermometer, it was less than 0.2°F. off, which is exceptionally good for a commercial thermometer. I placed the plants on scalded drain boards as I removed them from the bath. It took me fourteen hours to run all my plants through, and while there were any non-treated plants in the house I didn't touch a treated plant nor did anyone else do so. I scrubbed the shelves, stands and window ledges with Lysol before returning the plants to them, and I boiled all saucers or trays used in watering before I used them again.

After the twenty-four hour waiting period, I returned the plants to their usual places, happy in the thought that the mites were gone and that my plants would soon be normal again.





Illustrations by  
Neil C. Miller

For a while they did just as Dr. Smith's article predicted. None died, they all stood still for a few days, and then most of them started to grow. I threw several away, not because the treatment had killed them but because they were too sick-looking to offer much promise of being worth future care.

However, some plants didn't make much recovery in four weeks and I began to be very suspicious that they were still infested. I had sent a plant to the New Jersey State Agricultural Experiment Station at New Brunswick just prior to receiving the reply from Beltsville. They said the trouble definitely was cyclamen mite. That was before water bath treatment, of course. Now I loaded several treated plants into the car and took them to New Brunswick. Dr. C. C. Hamilton inspected them and had no difficulty finding mite by examining them under a binocular microscope.

I felt sick. If mite had survived the treatment on some plants they had probably survived on others. Or if they were present on only a few plants it would be next to impossible to tell on which plants they were, so infested plants could not be isolated with certainty. The possibilities of mite running through all my plants again loomed with horrible imminence.

So I set about the task of water bath treating them all the second time, being as careful as I had been the first time, and being particularly careful to separate

Fig. 1. No pictures were made of Mrs. Miller's plants while mites were on them in 1947, and she had no mite-attacked plants to photograph when the article was written. After considerable searching she finally located the above plants in another collection. They are all in the second stage of mite damage development as described in the text. But they are not exactly typical of normal mite development. The crowns of at least two and probably all of the plants had been removed by the original owner in the mistaken idea that mite damage could be arrested by so doing.

A plant showing normal evidence of mite development will, in the second stage of development, have leaves varying in size and distortion from exceedingly tiny knots in the center to perfectly normal leaves on the outside. Of the three above, the White Lady at the left is most nearly typical. The Mentor Boy in the center, being a more vigorous grower, has managed to keep its older leaves in good condition, but the small leaves in the center show dwarfing and distortion. The Pink Beauty at the right is about ready to collapse into the third stage.

These plants were all water-bathed about two months before the pictures were taken.

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the leaf petioles to release air bubbles in the crowns. The reason I was so careful to separate the petioles was that my husband, in discussing the treatment with several other chemists and physicists, had concluded that the most likely source of failure would be that there would be tiny air pockets or areas of petiole-to-petiole contact where water would not enter and that any mites in them would probably survive the treatment.

Again I set the plants on scalded drain boards, didn't touch treated plants while an infested plant was in the house, lysolled all window sills and stands, and scalded all watering dishes and trays.

Again none of the plants died, they all stood still for a while, and then most of them started to grow. Again I threw several plants away, not because the treatment killed them, but because they didn't seem to be worth future care.

As I didn't want to have to go clear to New Brunswick to have the plants examined for mite after the second treatment, I purchased a small hand lens from Sears Roebuck.

I managed to secure leaflets from several commercial growers on their method of handling mite. They all used pyrethrum-rotenone mixtures. But none of them went further than to say that they used them as mite controls, not once did I find any claims for mite extermination. As extermination was what I was after I didn't seriously consider any pyrethrum-rotenone sprays or dusts.

Dr. Smith's article had contained a reference to Circular 301 of the Department of Agriculture, "The Cyclamen Mite and the Broad Mite and Their Control," written by him and published in 1933. The booklet is extremely difficult to get, but by continued effort I was able to obtain one.

The booklet summarizes several years' work by Dr. Smith and his associates in studying the cyclamen mite and the broad mite, and it is a veritable mine of information. It does not report any actual experimentation on African Violets, the words "African Violet" and "Saintpaulia" do not occur in it. This merely indicates that in the early 1930's the African Violet was not an important commercial plant; it does not reflect on the thoroughness of Dr. Smith's investigations.

I am not going to attempt to abstract the booklet, but I am going to summarize some of the things in it, as they are basic in any discussion of mite injury and control:

a. There are two mites, the cyclamen mite (*Tarsonemus pallidus* Banks), the

broad mite (*Tarsonemus latus* Banks), and possibly a third (*Tarsonemus translucens* Green). They have frequently been confused, even in careful studies. They are so very small (about 1/75th of an inch long) as to be practically invisible to the naked eye. They feed on leaves or terminal buds by scratching the surface and drinking the liberated sap. They are wingless, spread from plant to plant by contact (leaf-to-leaf, or leaf-to-hand-to-leaf), do not hibernate, and must be on a host plant, i.e., can not live for any length of time on pots, benches, etc. Life cycles vary, but are less than two weeks for all kinds of mite. Cyclamen mite damage is generally indicated by leaves curling upward, broad mite damage by leaves curling downwards.

b. Plants that have been found to be affected by one or other mites include: chrysanthemum, banana copperleaf, pigweed, amaranthus, snapdragon, wax begonia, sugar beet, Madeira vine, bouvardia, China-aster, redpepper, Marguerite, orange, cosmos, cigar plant, cyclamen, dahlia, rocket larkspur, strawberry, fuchsia, flame-ray gerbera, cotton, Chinese hibiscus, snapweed, sweet potato, morning glory, Linden broadleaf, lantana, matrimony vine, tomato, mango, tobacco, woodsorrel, Boston ivy, geranium, avocado, petunia, bean, stevia, water-pepper, blackberry, curly dock, German ivy, potato, marigold, torenia, verbena, purslane, pea and zinnia. No claim is made that this is a complete list nor is there any implication that mite are generally found on any of them. But as the list includes many common garden or house plants there is a clear indication that bringing any other plant into contact with your African Violets is to introduce the possibility of infestation. Many of the above plants can resist mite attack better than violets can, hence will not give visual notice that they are infested.

c. Methods of control discussed are: dusting with finely divided sulphur, diatomaceous earth, pyrethrum and/or rotenone, and hydrated lime; spraying with white oil emulsion; and fumigation with calcium cyanide and naphthalene. All of these had various degrees of success (or failure) on different plants. The discussion concludes: "None of the foregoing fumigants, dusts and sprays which were effective against the broad mite were completely successful against the cyclamen mite . . . The latter is not only concealed in the distorted plant parts, within the leaf tissue, or in the crown

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Fig. 2. This White Lady shows damage that is fairly typical in a plant that became infested at about 6-8 months of age. The outer leaves are normal in development, but are beginning to wilt in the general weakening of the plant. The medium sized leaves are a trifle distorted, showing that they were past the shoot stage when infested. The smaller leaves clumped in the center just never had a chance; mite attacked them the moment they made their appearance.

where it is protected from dust and sprays, but even when exposed it is also more resistant to the two fumigants than the broad mite. The successful control of the cyclamen mite is not precluded by the present study, since proper repetition of applications through the growing period of the plant may so reduce the infestation and retard spread that a commercial crop can be marketed. However, spraying, dusting and fumigations with various materials have failed in the hands of experienced greenhouse men, and the losses have continued high each year. Because of the failure of these methods, the mites have become established on plants and a complete or partial crop loss has resulted."

d. Complete instructions are given for the water bath method of treatment. (I have seen credit given otherwise for originating the water bath method. While I have no desire to provoke controversy as to who actually originated it, I simply want to point out that Dr. Smith published it in 1933, reporting on experiments that went back to 1931.)

It should be stated again that no work on, or any mention of, *Saintpaulias* is contained in the booklet. Also, the point should be noted that failure to control cyclamen mite successfully by dusting, spraying or fumigation in 1933 might not at all mean that adequate controls were not available in 1947. But it did seem significant that pyrethrum-rotenone had failed in carefully conducted experiments in 1933, but were reported as the only controls used commercially in 1947.

Now to resume the narration of my story: Within three weeks after the second water bath treatment, most of the plants were growing satisfactorily. But some few looked suspicious, just as some had after the first treatment. I used the hand lens and found mite on several plants again.

I delayed the third water bath treatment until October. My greenhouse was nearing completion, requiring only the installation of heat, and, being freshly constructed of new lumber and painted throughout, could not possibly have any mites in it. Despite all my Lysol treatments, I still had a lurking fear that the mites lived somewhere in the framework of the windows and reinfested the plants when returned there. Dr. Smith's article had stated plainly enough that they lived on plants only and would quickly die if plants were not in reach, but at the time I was afraid to believe it. Subsequent experience has convinced me that Dr. Smith's report is entirely correct, that the mites must live on a host plant, don't hibernate, and don't lodge in window sills, flower stands, or greenhouse benches.

Early in October heat was installed in the greenhouse. I gave all plants a third water bath treatment. And this time I was again as meticulously careful to hold temperatures, have complete immersion, clean out debris, wash my own hands, etc., etc. as I had been before. I moved the plants from treatment directly to the greenhouse.

And three weeks later I found mite again.

Even before giving the third treatment I had little faith left in the water bath method, so I continued search for other means of control. My husband went over to the DuPont Pest Control Station at Wilmington, and talked to Dr. H. F. Dietz. Dr. Dietz had nothing concrete to offer as duPont had done no work on ornamentals since the war started, and didn't know when they would get around to do any work on them due to the tremendous backlog of more pressing problems. He did review and discuss several possible control

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methods, and pointed out the weaknesses of each. He concurred with my husband's belief that air pockets or contact areas at the bases of the leaf petioles would allow some mites to survive each water bath treatment, hence the water bath treatment would not accomplish mite extermination.

But most important of all, Dr. Dietz advised getting in touch with Dr. W. E. Blauvelt, of Cornell University. He had heard that Dr. Blauvelt had done some work for commercial growers of Saint-paulias in New York and that he has been successful.

So I immediately wrote to Dr. Blauvelt.

As this marks the end of my experience with the water bath method I shall make these concluding remarks concerning it: I consider it a failure. I don't think it is possible for anyone to use more care in carrying it out than I did, particularly in the second and third treatments, when all my plants, even baby seedlings with only two leaves, were treated. I do think that each treatment cleaned up many plants entirely and killed a very large percentage of the mites on the others. One month after treatment the plants looked rather healthy with no widespread signs of infestation. Perhaps if I hadn't had hand lens and microscope and expert technical assistance in identifying the mites, I too, would have concluded the water bath treatment was successful and would have been singing its praises. And six months later, after the mites had had time to multiply, I would have been wondering which new plant carried in the second infestation. After many discussions with many people, I have been able to develop only three possible explanations for the failure of the method:

a. I did not remove soil from around the crowns of plants in 4-inch pots. This was recommended by Dr. Smith, but I didn't do it. This could be the sole cause for the failure, although I doubt it.

b. Perhaps all living mites were killed but the eggs were not.

c. The air pockets and contact areas at the bases of the petioles mentioned before. This I believe to be an inherent weakness of the method.

If no other method were available and I had to make the water bath method work I would first try removing the soil from around the crowns of plants in larger pots. Then I would try repeating the treatment at proper intervals to kill mite between hatching and egg-laying. If neither of these worked, I would increase the immersion time. If the mites survive the regular 15-minute treatment in air pockets at the bases of the petioles, there ought to be a

length of treatment that would heat all plant tissue (stem and petioles) high enough to kill the mite. Whether the plant would survive this extended treatment is another matter.

And with this I leave the water bath method. Anybody who wants it can have it. I will stick to selenate.

Dr. Blauvelt's prompt reply came as music to my ears. I quote from it: "I have developed a new method of control for this pest, that has given us complete control in repeated experiments with a suitable number of plants without plant injury. During the past three years the method has been used extensively by hundreds of commercial growers with the treatment of hundreds of thousands of plants without reports of injury and with very satisfactory results. The method involves watering the soil with a very dilute solution of sodium selenate. This material is then taken up through the roots of the plants and poisons the sap. When the mites feed they get the poison along with their food and are killed. This method gives continuous automatic control against reinfestation from infested plants which may be brought in and mixed with the treated plants." This seemed to be exactly what I had been hoping for. I secured some selenate at once.

Dr. Blauvelt's mixing instructions had been developed for greenhouse men who work on a large scale: "Dissolve 100 grams of sodium selenate in one gallon of water. Dilute one quart of this stock solution to 25 gallons." These directions result in an end solution of one gram per gallon. So I made my solutions by dissolving one gram of selenate in one gallon of water.

Dr. Blauvelt in his carefully controlled experiments with this solution had used one fluid ounce per 3-inch pot and two fluid ounces per 4-inch pot. He said there was a wide margin of safety and more could be used if desired.

It was now the first of November and I was exceedingly weary of fighting mite. I had lost most of my old plants, including a Blue Boy which had been in bloom continuously for over four years. And for all I then knew the selenate treatment could be just as disappointing as the water bath treatment. I decided it was kill or cure: I doubled the dose. I gave each 4-inch pot four ounces of the solution. I set the 2-inch and 3-inch pots in a tray of solution and let them take up what they would. They took up about three ounces, on the average, a triple or greater dose.

For several weeks the plants looked pretty sick; I was afraid I had killed them all. In the middle of December, I examined

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the plants with the glass. I found mite on one plant. I immediately gave every plant a repeat dosage: two ounces per 4-inch pot, one ounce per 3 inch pot, all they would take up for smaller pots.

The one plant on which I had found mite I set by itself and have examined it periodically since then. I have not seen another mite. The plant has recovered and shows little evidence of its ordeal. It has been in continuous bloom since March (1948). I still allow it to sit where I placed it in December. I regard it as a monument to victory in an eight month battle.

By the middle of January the plants had largely recovered and were beginning to appear healthy again. Blooms started appearing in February, and I have had a profusion of blooms continuously since then.

No plant has shown any trace of new mite damage since December. I have raised well over five hundred plants, standing generally in leaf-to-leaf contact. If there were any mite present an infestation would have developed before this. I have every reason to believe that the selenate treatment exterminated them.

I did not lose a single plant directly because of the selenate treatment. Even though I severely over-dosed them. In the intervening months I have thrown away several of the older plants because they did not recover sufficiently to be worth space and attention (and their progeny were coming on). But their failure to recover can not be ascribed directly to the selenate, they were already seriously weakened by several months of mite damage and three water bath treatments.

However, two instances have been reported to me of loss of individual plants after selenate treatment. I don't know the condition of the plants before treatment. Perhaps they were in the same condition as the plants I threw away after the water bath treatments: they were so far gone they should have been discarded before treatment instead of after.

My plants were badly weakened by eight months of mite and three water bath treatments before selenation. They were also over-dosed terrifically. And for several weeks last winter they were too cold. I had only single glazing in the greenhouse and cold air fell from the panes and collected on the benches. And the humidity was low due to the water freezing out of the air onto the panes, the low humidity causing the soil in the pots to be colder than the air due to the wet-bulb effect. Ripping the sides off the benches and Cel-O-Glass tacked to the inside of the sash cured both difficulties. I mention these



Fig. 3. The up-curved leaves of this Mentor Boy are typical of cyclamen mite damage. The curling is caused by a plant defense mechanism. The mites feed by scratching the surface of the growing bud or shoot and sucking the liberated sap. To resist the scratching the leaves develop a corky layer.

This surface cork layer does not grow so rapidly as the normal tissue beneath. The lower surface of the leaf thus grows more rapidly than the upper and gradually curves around it.

things, weakened condition, over-dosage, and being too cold, because I feel that they had an important bearing on several undesirable conditions which my plants developed after selenation which I don't think were due solely to selenation, but which I feel I should report:

a. I have lost some twenty seedlings this past summer because they didn't develop properly, the foliage grew all right for several months, then just seemed to stop. Examination always showed inadequate roots. These plants were only tiny babies when water-bathed, and some actually floated out of the pots. Possibly the roots were damaged then. Or the low temperature may have been to blame. Or maybe the selenate is solely responsible.

b. I have lost about a dozen plants this past summer due to crown rot. This number is probably not excessive, but it is a larger proportion than I ever had before.

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c. My plants gave off a rather unpleasant odor for some ten weeks after selenation. I don't know whether this is a normal result of normal treatment or not. I have not noticed it after smaller dosages that I have given to newer plants recently. Maybe my plants gave it off last winter because of the terrific over-dosage I gave them.

d. My plants recovered from selenation more slowly than they did from water bath treatment. They still had twisted, wilted, leaves two months after treatment. I doubt that this is normal because I have not seen it in properly treated plants. Dr. Blauvelt did not indicate that recovery would be so slow, and commercial growers could not tolerate such slow recovery. More likely it was due to over-dosage and low temperature in the greenhouse during the recovery period.

e. Certain varieties, notably whites and pinks, show residual leaf curling much longer than others. On a very few of my plants I can still (October, 1948) see slight signs of selenate distortion.

f. The leaves of many plants were noticeably darkened, some even having a slightly bronzed effect. This was not particularly undesirable, as it frequently brought out veining that does not ordinarily appear. On some of the seedlings I would very much like to preserve the effect, but am quite certain I can't.

Experience will have to be acquired and reported by others before these conditions can be definitely shown to be either direct results of the selenate treatment or incidental by-products of the conditions of treatment which I now consider them to be.

During all my work, I was careful not to get any selenate solution on the leaves of the plants. Dr. Blauvelt pointed out that if any did get on the foliage it should be washed off to prevent burning.

Now for a few general comments on the selenate treatment:

a. It will clean up an infestation. I don't know whether I had cyclamen mite or broad mite, or both. (Possibly both, as I had both up-curved and down-curved leaves.) And my infestation wasn't heavy at beginning of selenation, due to repeated water bath treatments. But if it will completely clean up a slight infestation I see no reason to believe it would not cure a heavier one.

b. Many plants will show definite reaction to it, some will probably won't

badly. My original plants last winter reacted to an alarming extent, but they were over-selenated and were weak before treatment. Young plants that I have treated recently have shown no reaction at all. It is beginning to appear that reaction to proper selenate dosage is roughly proportional to the age of the plant, being little or none for young vigorously growing plants, and being serious even to death for older plants, but my own experience will not allow me to state this definitely. Nor can I state with any definite assurance what the recovery time will be. My plants required up to two months and longer as explained previously. I wish I could be more explicit on details of reaction and recovery, but I can't. I have had experience with over-selenated plants of all ages and with normally selenated younger plants. I have not had any experience with normally selenated older plants that most people will have to treat.

None of my plants was blooming when treated so I don't know whether blossom drop would be occasioned or not, but there is no residual bloom-detering effect that I have been able to recognize.

c. As indicated just above, restraint should be exercised in treating plants more than one year old or plants already in poor condition. The chance of possible loss exists, although I didn't lose any myself. The experiences of those who did lose plants indicates that selenation of old or weakened plants should be considered as a calculated risk with the possibility considered that the cure may also be fatal. But I believe that a method of slight dosage (say one-half ounce at four week intervals) could be worked out so that the mites would be killed before the mites or the selenate killed the plants.

d. Because of its reaction on older plants, selenate can not be regarded as an un-mixed blessing. Doubtless, many plants will be killed because it is used. And, unfortunately, the plants most likely to be lost will be the older prized favorites of the collections. But once mite gets into a collection the plants are ultimately doomed anyhow; there is just no end to the throwing-away process. So it would appear better to selenate, take what plant loss results, and get rid of mite completely so that younger plants coming on can have a chance for normal development. However, that is a decision which each grower must make for herself.

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e. The crown-rot mentioned above and some other circumstances which it would be difficult to detail make me feel that selenate has had a weakening effect on plant crowns. I can't describe it, I'm by no means certain it exists, I simply mention it so that others may be on the look-out for it.

f. Logically, use of sodium selenate should be regarded as a mite preventive rather than as a mite cure. This would involve selenating healthy plants that have no apparent need for treatment. But at present I can't recommend it. My own experience would indicate pre-selenation to be all right, but experience of others does not confirm this. More will need to be known about the lethal effect of selenate on older plants before pre-selenation can be recommended as standard procedure.

Where can selenate be obtained? Probably not from your local druggist, as it is not an ordinary drug stock, but it will do no harm to ask. It can be gotten from Plant Products Corp., Blue Point, Long Island, N. Y., in 100 gram, pound and larger quantities. It can be obtained from Eimer and Amend, 635 Greenwich St., New York 14, N. Y., or Fisher Scientific Co. at either 717 Forbes St., Pittsburg, Pa., or 2109 Locust St., St. Louis 3, Mo., at 5 grams for fifty cents, 10 grams for seventy five cents, or 25 grams for one dollar fifty cents. I bought an excess last fall, so I still have some which I would sell at the above prices. Because of its poisonous nature it can not be sent by parcel post, hence has to travel by express.

I had facilities available for accurately weighing one gram quantities. Most people will not be so fortunate (although they can always get it done at a drug store), so I have worked out an alternate method: A level quarter teaspoonful is almost exactly a gram. Use the quarter teaspoon measure in a set of dime store measuring spoons. Be sure the material is free of lumps and the measure is not heaped. Don't compact the material in the measure by tapping or pressing. Simply fill the measure with the lump-free material, strike off level, and dump into a gallon jug.

If you add the water slowly and shake the jug while adding it the selenate will all be in solution before the jug is filled. Cork the jug and invert a couple times to insure thorough mixing. Label. The solution is now ready to use.

Most homes will have a vessel in which fluid ounces can be measured. If not, a marked bottle or a graduate can be obtained from any drug store.

I think the heavy dosages I used and the December repeat dosage were entirely unnecessary and did more harm than good. The quantities recommended by Dr. Blauvelt are adequate and should be used: two fluid ounces for 4-inch pots, one fluid ounce for smaller pots. The best method of application is to let the plants become dry enough that they should be watered and then to water from the bottom. In this way the solution will be taken up quickly and none will get on the leaves.

Two or three weeks are required for the plants to absorb enough selenate to begin to free themselves of mite.

continued on next page

Below:

Fig. 4. This Pink Beauty is about ready to give up and collapse its outer leaves onto the edge of the pot.

The hairy growth all over the crown leaves is another defense mechanism that plants frequently develop to ward off insect attack. The projecting and interlacing hairs form a barrier that larger insects can't penetrate. But growth of hair is no protection against cyclamen mite; they are so tiny they go right through it.



## Mite, Water Bath and Selenate

As the material is more or less evenly distributed throughout the plant, some of it is lost whenever a leaf or a flower stem is removed. Eventually the concentration will become so low that mites will no longer be killed. So repeat dosages are necessary. Dr. Blauvelt suggested repeat dosages at three month intervals, giving the first dose when the rooted seedlings are well established. I haven't selenated that early or that often. My older plants were all so heavily over-selenated that they ought to carry adequate protection still. What to do with incoming plants is a problem: If they haven't been selenated already they should be, but if they have been selenated previously further treatment isn't necessary and might give some set-back. I keep them isolated and decide by observation what to do. Generally I selenate. When I don't selenate, I reason that even if I am wrong in regarding the plant as selenated and it does actually carry mite my other plants carry their own defenses so no great harm can result.

Now a word as to the poisonous nature of sodium selenate. It is a poison, and a violent poison, both to plants and animals. It must be treated with the respect due all poisons and with the added respect due a violent one. The dry materials and the solutions should always be carefully labeled and placed where they can't be mistaken for less dangerous materials. Small quantities should never be allowed to sit around away from the main container. Any spills should be immediately cleaned up and the cleaning-up materials properly disposed of. None should ever enter the mouth, nose, ears, or eyes; if some does enter by accident it should be washed off with copious amounts of water. If any is swallowed vomiting should be induced and a doctor called. Any utensils or devices (such as the measuring spoons used in preparing solutions) should be immediately washed. Any dry material falling on the hands during solution preparation should be washed off. The hands and all measuring and treating vessels should be washed after using the solution. The dry material and the solutions should be kept out of reach of children and irresponsible persons.

During my conversations and correspondence with Beltsville Research Station, New Jersey State Agriculture Experiment Station, DuPont Pest Control Station, Ohio State Agricultural Experiment Station, New Hampshire State University and Cornell University I received comments on several other methods of control. The following notes on each should be regarded only as indications of general feeling, not as final evaluations:

a. Pyrethrum-rotenone sprays or dusts, with or without nicotine. Have been extremely useful in the past as

they were about the only materials available. But as they do not give complete kills their effectiveness is dependent on the diligence of the spraying or dusting program.

b. Piperonyl cyclohexanone. Of little value by itself, may increase the toxicity of pyrethrum-rotenone mixtures. (I tried this, it gave knock-down but not kill.)

c. Loro. Varying degrees of success reported. May be a control if used at the proper intervals. May cause permanent stunting, slight overdose will kill plants. (I tried this at the concentrations recommended for cyclamen mite on cyclamen. It killed the violets immediately.)

d. Azobenzene fumigation or dusting with Azofume 70. Has possibilities and will probably ultimately be successful. Dosage will have to be carefully controlled.

e. Naphthalene fumigation. Too narrow a range between concentrations that will kill the mites and concentrations that will kill the plants. However, a good rule of thumb technique is claimed. But be sure you are firmly attached to somebody's thumb before trying it; I have seen plants so thoroughly killed by it they appeared to have been boiled.

f. Paradichlorobenzene fumigation. (A DuPont product sold under such trade names as Dichloricide, Parafume, etc., the material you put in clothes, rugs, etc., to kill moths). Essentially the same as naphthalene: Not wide enough range between concentrations that will kill the mite and concentrations that will kill the plants. Some one ought to be able to work out a paper bag technique such as is used with naphthalene. (But don't start with your prized plants.)

g. Lethane. Probably the same as Loro in effect.

h. Methylbromide fumigation. Kills the mites, and the plants too.

i. Hexaethyltetraphosphate, alkylarylthianophosphate, and hydroxypentamethylflaban. Under test, but too early to make any predictions.

The above appraisals were as of November, 1947. Some of the newer materials may have been proven effective and workable by this time.

A lot of interesting conjecture can be built around the fact that commercial growers until very recently had relied (because nothing else was available) on  
continued on next page





Fig. 5. This enlargement of the center of the Mentor Boy in Fig. 1 and Fig. 3 shows clearly how center leaves become dwarfed, distorted and hairy. The black-and-white picture doesn't show it, but actually the lower surfaces of all the crown leaves are red or blotched with red.

pyrethrum-rotenone mixtures whereas these mixtures were never found effective in carefully controlled experiments. Stretched to the limit, it could mean that most of the plants in trade carried mite which would eventually multiply and destroy the plants. This could result in a general feeling that African Violets are hard to raise. And such a feeling certainly exists. How many people have you heard say, "I just can't grow violets. For three successive winters I had a nice plant but when warm weather came it died." Warm weather does favor mite growth. Maybe the "May-Flop" is only cyclamen mite: the one plant grower would not recognize the mite damage and would regard the death of the plant merely as indication of her inability to make it grow. If this is true then the African Violet should be in for a great up-surge in popularity. Many commercial growers are now using selenate (consult your recent price lists for verification of this) so Mrs. One-Plant may be surprised to find that her blue plant has survived the summer. So next winter she gets a pink and a white. These two survive because they have been selenated free of mite by the grower. She will begin to think she has really learned how to grow violets at last. So she will get a Bi-Color and a Red Head, and start leaf preparations from all five. Soon she will be writing down South and out West for price lists.

While the above is pure conjecture the fact is that the future looks good for commercially grown plants. Meanwhile the situation is not so nice for the ordinary hobbyist who propagates her own plants or secures them from non-selenating growers. It is possible for even the best-intentioned gift or exchange of plants to introduce mite into a collection. The leaf of that beautiful new Little Baby Blue Eyes that your sister in Texas sent you after she had gotten a plant from a pen-pal in Minnesota may have introduced mite into both your collections.

You plant the Little Baby Blue Eyes in vermiculite, get mite on your fingers, and then handle your Heavenly Heather, scattering mite all over it. Two weeks later you give leaves from your Heavenly Heather to three friends, thus infesting their collections. That makes six infested collections and not one of the six persons concerned has any idea she has mite, won't know it for several weeks yet, and won't believe it for a month longer.

I have recently heard of several very fine collections being lost because of mite. Prevalence of mite seems to be definitely on the increase. This is not to be wondered at. It requires the introduction of only one mite-carrying plant to infest a whole collection. Collectors are continually acquiring new plants, the plants generally stand in leaf-to-leaf contact or are tended by the same pair of hands, and an infested plant can not generally be recognized when it is introduced (or it wouldn't be introduced), so it is almost inevitable that an infestation will be wide-spread before it is recognized. Throwing plants away won't cure it as only the visibly bad plants will

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# Seedlings - Pro and Con

Regina and Warren Gottshall

Seedlings have opened the field and are rapidly broadening the scope and developing the strains of Saintpaulias. Doubtless we now think we have perfection when we look at some of the varieties on the market. Consider then that this progress has come about chiefly within the past twenty-five to thirty years - from *Ionantha* and *Kewensis* thru *Blue Boy* to *Marine* and all the others. Imagine then what the next twenty-five years will bring with so many more people devoting their time to the breeding of African Violets.

The duPonts, as an example, while considered by many to be "out of this world", are still lacking one point for perfection - prolific blooming. Continual cross-pollination of this strain will make the duPonts of tomorrow something not imagined today - and perhaps better shippers. The Supremes are now mostly a matter of mutation and are slowly cropping up in many varieties but selective pollination will bring many improvements to this strain. It is our personal opinion at this time that the blooms of *Blue Boy Supreme* are the loveliest yet produced or born on any variety. We are impressed by their enormous size - judging by today's standards - and their thick velvety texture; but *Blue Boy Supreme* does not generally make a very symmetrical or attractive plant.

*White Lady* is claimed by many to be temperamental or a shy bloomer; others consider it the "only" white to date. Regardless of your own individual opinion the entire white field is still open. A few good whites are being developed however. We have seen two distinctly different white seedlings - not yet under propagation. Both have foliage very nearly the shade of that on *White Lady* but one has rounded and heavily quilted leaves and makes a very symmetrical plant. The other has finely toothed edges and thin smooth foliage closely resembling the species *Kewensis*. Imagine the field a little broader with the white blossoms over the lovely quilted foliage of *Neptune* or the dark beauty of *Ruffles* or *Commodore*.

Perhaps you are of the opinion that the market is now overflowing with blues but this is chiefly because the predominance of blue is due to that being the natural color of the native plants. White, pink and orchid are the innovations and have been developed partly by mutation but mainly because of sheer determination on the part of the breeders. The blue monopoly will probably hold for many years as this seems to be the color preference not only of the species but of collectors as well. The day will arrive when there is more of a balance between colors and hues. Even the blues -

count just how many true blues there actually are and you will be due for a surprise - most of them have definite lavender or purple tinge. More true colors will eventually be achieved and the red color will, before so very much longer, be a reality.

Let us consider all these things as being in favor of cross-pollination and the resulting seedlings. Let us also realize that the better the varieties are developed the sooner some of our minor ones now existing, or those closely similar to others, will be in discard. The collector will become more discriminating in his or her choice of purchases as they realize the impossibility of acquiring all and sundry, because of limited window space. On the other hand this space limitation will soon force the opening of an entire new field - barely touched as yet - the field of miniatures. Selective cross-pollinating of the smaller varieties will achieve a true class of miniatures in a complete range of hues.

Not as a point of digression, but with serious thought, let us count and consider the evils, or at least minor points, evolving from the raising of seedlings. Perhaps better still we should return to the beginning, i.e. pollination. Many of us are seized with the desire at some time to try our hand at this "cross-pollination business" but, do we always exercise good judgment in our choice of subjects by going about it with a definite purpose in mind? Or do we just mess about haphazardly with whatever we happen to have available at the moment this great urge hits us? If the latter, we are apt to expend our time, energy and patience waiting and hoping to develop the "last word" from a mediocre mother and an insignificant father. You probably have a 1000 to 1 chance of success. Your *Blue Boy* papa blooms will probably turn up on *White Lady* mama leaves which, in our opinion, will not be much in the way of outstanding achievement.

As before mentioned the best place to start any undertaking is at the beginning - the beginning, in this case, contradictory as it may sound, is in the ultimate goal to be achieved. Decide upon some combination of leaf and bloom you want to produce, or even a bloom not yet achieved or dreamed of by anyone else - two colored bicolors, for instance, instead of two toned bicolors; or clematis flowered; or a plicata. Saintpaulias are not violets so we need not feel we are violating any Divine rule by endeavoring to develop a radically different type of bloom. Then with this aim in view map out a program, a plan to be followed. The program may be entirely wrong but we will at least know where we are going. We may not make it on our first cross, or our second, or ever, for that



matter, but we are bound to develop that continual reaching-out that will bring some reward eventually. Let us say that we want a white bloom on Blue Girl foliage - we cross the White Lady onto the Blue Girl - perhaps we make it, perhaps we do not - if we do the leaf pattern may not be exactly like the one we want, though some of the characteristics we do want may be present. Then we recross the nearest seedling to our goal onto the Blue Girl again, two or three times if necessary, but with persistence we may win out in the end and have contributed something to the Saintpaulia variety list. (The leaf does not designate the sex of plant so there is no compulsion to adhere to the "Girl" name even though a precedent has been set)

In the meantime our "mistakes" are cluttering our homes and crowding our shelves. The problem of what to do with them is not for us to say. Perhaps the kindest thing for us to do, for the benefit of all other collectors, would be to relegate them to the compost heap; unless - collectors can be educated to accept seedlings as seedlings and not named varieties. Can we school ourselves to say, when we see something different, "Has that a name?" instead of "What variety is that?" In practically all other species of plants many people are content with seedlings for their own beauty alone and not because of the lovely sounding names they have. As an instance, thousands of *Hemerocallis* seedlings are sold annually without the purchaser sitting down immediately and giving them names of Sally's Puce or Schlieffenheimer's Pomegranate.

The result of our many crosses may be one plant with totally radical leaf or bloom and nothing else to go with it to make for perfection. It is no sin to branch out then, while keeping to our original goal, for a one track mind is a sorry thing indeed. Imagine another good bloom on your lovely new foliage and get to work. You may make it eventually but at least you will have discovered that the good, new Saintpaulias are not achieved overnight or without painstaking effort.

Neither should we judge our new seedlings by their first blooms. To cite an instance, Miss Mary Wilcox, that veteran in the field of hand-pollinated seeds and the originator of some of our best seedlings to date, once wrote that she had one plant of which every first bloom bore a pure white stripe down the center of each lobe. Anyone less careful than Miss Wilcox would have immediately proclaimed a new variety but that lady waited for the second blooming only to find that the white stripe had disappeared completely. The hue or tone of your first bloom may not be the same as that of the second and subsequent blooms, or exposure or weather

conditions may make a variation. Should this be the case the most constant tone should be given in descriptions. Blue Girl does not always bear the same shade of blue but may vary with the seasons or other conditions from a light blue to a rather dark shade. The fact remains that it is still Blue Girl. A real Light Blue Girl will bear through most of the conditions light blue blooms.

With these ideas in mind, let us set about our task of developing more and better Saintpaulia varieties.

### THE UNPREDICTABLE AFRICAN VIOLET LEAF

Martha E. Husted

Upon opening my mail one frosty November morning, I found to my surprise two African Violet leaves. They had come all the way from Denver, Colorado in a letter sent regular mail, not for me to propagate, but to compare with another plant.

Needless to say, they were sad looking, very cold, almost black and flat as a flower pressed many years in a book. The stems were dry and flat like the leaves, but neither leaves nor stems were broken.

One leaf had been a lovely specimen, a Girl leaf from a seedling. My first thought was to try to save it.

After making a fresh cut on the stem, I placed the leaf in a saucer of cold water, completely submerging the entire leaf and stem. After soaking up water all day they had regained an almost normal color and plumpness. That night I crossed my fingers and placed my leaves in my home made propagating box containing vermiculite.

On December 23, I lifted both leaves with large clumps of roots and little plants starting. Those small plants should be peeping through the soil any day now. Their progress has been followed by several growers here in Washington with great interest.

I do not recommend mailing leaves this way but I do hope my experience will be of some help in saving leaves which have suffered from the cold.

### CINCINNATI CONVENTION !!

APRIL 29 and 30.

African Violets, Many new varieties now available, Amazons, Old Lace and others. Write for price list.

MRS. T. C. BEE

RT. No. 3

Newnan, Ga.

# *On the Trail of the African Violet in British Columbia*

Mrs. Ada Muir,

Having been a grower of exhibition chrysanthemums for a number of years, cradling upwards of 500 each year from the cutting stage to the nine or ten inch pot, I decided that either old age or laziness were catching up with me, and I wanted something easier.

I found solace in the growing of the begonia, then tried gloxinia bulbs and at the same time was intrigued by accounts of the African Violets which appeared in horticultural journals.

There were no advertisements of plants, leaves or seed at that time in Canadian magazines, so I sent to the United States for leaves. When these leaves arrived they had brown spots on them which the sender afterwards explained were from sprinkling them with water as it was very hot weather. The brown spots spread and the leaves died without producing root.

Then I received a price list of indoor plants from Eastern Canada. Any ordered would be sent postage free but fifteen cents must be added for packing. Four different African Violet plants were listed, so I sent for one of each and added the fifteen cents. They were mailed on November 1st and reached me on November 11th. The parcel might have contained a bit of haberdashery from its appearance. The outer wrapper of brown paper was second or third hand, if not older, and each plant was wrapped in paper that had once encased a loaf of bread.

There was no soil on the roots, but they were wrapped in moss that might have been damp 11 days previously and the roots were dried out. Leaves were quite yellow but I planted them hoping for the best. The *Ionantha* was the last to give up and it was quite dead in a week.

By this time I was a very interested member of an African Violet Round Robin and hadn't any excuse for being there, so in order that my membership might be in good standing, I decided to buy plants in local stores or greenhouses if possible. There were none to be had, and I was informed that the owner of the largest greenhouses had filled one of them with African Violets to have them in bloom for Mother's Day and he had thrown 75% out, as there was no demand. Other greenhouse men said they hadn't space to set apart for the African Violet, as it did not harmonize with plants for which there was a certain demand. It was too temperamental.

Then I bought seeds from two advertisers in the United States and a member of a Begonia Round Robin sent some that

she had grown. That was in January this year, so, believing that I could maintain heat and moisture necessary, even so early in the year, I planted them and some gloxinia and begonia seeds. The little plants were up beyond the magnifying glass stage and in germination there was nothing to choose between the expensive, the lower priced and the gift seeds.

I watched them day after day, had removed the coverings from the pots then was stricken with influenza which was epidemic here. When I was able to get to the seed pans there was not a plant left as they had dried out owing to the intense furnace heat and lack of moisture.

Weakened with illness, I was in no mood for a new commencement and then one day noticed an advertisement of African Violets by the hundred in a Trade Florist Magazine (Canadian). I wrote and ordered 100, either C.O.D. or would remit on receipt of invoice. A very friendly letter came in reply, dictated by the head of the firm who was in a hospital bed. He gave directions for a potting soil and thought I should try 50 plants first as parcel post was a very risky method of sending nursery stock.

I replied that I wanted 100 and they could either send them air mail or express to the nearest express office which was then 25 miles distant. I enclosed an open check which I thought would be sufficient to cover the 8% tax demanded by the Government and shipping charges.

On August 18th, exactly four months from the time I ordered them a very crumpled carton arrived, marked airmail, but it had been sent parcel post instead, probably owing to the cost, as only 90¢ had been paid for transit.

The carton measured 12" by 7" by 6" and placed in the bottom was a board  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch smaller than the area of the bottom. On this board had been placed 18 cardboard plant bands, 2 inches deep and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter. The plant bands had held five or six plants and evidently then filled with silver sand.

Could anything but a child mind imagine that those little plant bands were going to remain at the bottom of a carton six inches deep without anchorage of any kind for a 3,000 mile journey? I doubt they would have made it if carried all the way by hand. They didn't! Only six were in place and the rest were a jumbled pile of silver sand, African Violet leaves, dead roots and broken plant bands. All were piled at one end of the carton as there was a gaping hole at the other end. Parcel post officials evidently don't believe in

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## On the Trail of the African Violet in British Columbia

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signs, for there were plenty on the top of the carton, and it arrived here on its side.

There was one plant only that had not lost its leaves but, as in many of the others, there was a little green crown showing. I planted them, trying to blow off the silver sand but it was still too damp. In a few days it appeared as if ten might survive so I wrote the firm telling of the condition in which the parcel arrived. In reply they wrote that they were sending more by air express immediately.

The plants arrived on the same day as the letter, August 27th and this time they were in a grape basket, wrapped in sixes in wax paper, smothered in silver sand but with the propagation leaves attached. I tried to get rid of the sand, but it was too damp to move.

At the time of writing, just one month from the day I received the plants, there are 42 that have not died of crown rot. If I had a similar experience again, I would wash out the sand with warm water, but I was afraid to when these arrived. Collecting here in Canada definitely is not fun but when you pass 21 years of age, as I have, you learn to persevere in the fight for what you want.

## WIK-FED POTS

### FINE FOR AFRICAN VIOLETS

Self watering, sub-irrigating, 4" pot. Stands 5" tall with reservoir base. Made of an easily cleaned plastic. Spun-glass wick feeds water and plant food from reservoir. Violets and other indoor plants thrive in these pots. Offered in six pastel shades - cream, pink, coral, yellow, green and lavender. All with black base. The green and lavender are beautifully marbled.

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### AFRICAN VIOLETS

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Many others. Send for list.

## HARMON NURSERY

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Prospect, Ohio



## COMBATING DISEASE

Iva Woods

Sturdy Saintpaulias demand clean places to grow. And in order to avoid disastrous diseases from invading "growing" benches, a constant program to combat all enemies is being used by commercial growers. The following data was gathered recently from a written survey.

In all cases, the necessity of sterile pots, soil and benches before each crop of Saintpaulias was considered the initial step. Then, as an added prevention a spray program is maintained. The more dreaded pests are mealy bug, thrip and the mite. In most greenhouses, leaf cuttings receive their first treatment as soon as rooted and this spraying is continued at intervals of either one week, ten days, or two weeks (according to instructions) for the time the plants remain in the greenhouse.

Some growers advocate 1 teaspoon of Volck and  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of Black Leaf 40 to one quart of tepid water. This will control mealy bugs and thrip. It is important that the spray be directed down into the crown of each plant, so that the compact growth that usually affords a breeding place is completely sprinkled. This may be used on both plants and rooted leaf cuttings at 10 day or 2 week intervals.

Liquid Nicotine (1 part to 200 parts water or 1 teaspoon to 1 quart) used as a spray will control pests, even including mites. Plants should be sprayed every two weeks, regardless of size.

N.N.O.R. (one-half to a teaspoon to one quart of tepid water) sprayed on all age plants every two weeks, carefully giving the crowns a good treatment, is also an excellent preventative.

Another good product is OPTOX, using three-fourths teaspoon to one quart of water. It is used as a spray and regular dates are adhered to.

And since the introduction of Sodium Selenate into the treatment program, many growers are using it regularly for watering into the soil. Tho' it, like all poisonous solutions, must be used with precaution!

It would be well for us "amateurs" to profit by these experiences of recognized growers. And for us to remember that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". But too, we shall have to experiment in the sense of finding our own favorite formula and method that will best suit our growing conditions.

# A Timely Warning, Overwatering?

Harriet Lawton

As Spring approaches many of us will be thinking of giving our plants a breathing spell, possibly setting them on the porch where they will have plenty of fresh air after the long winter in the house. And, I mean literally a "breathing" spell! This is probably more true of the Northern States or colder climates rather than the Southern ones where fresh air may circulate freely throughout the year and where little is experienced by these growers because of lack of humidity due to furnace heat. This is one of our biggest problems, (lack of humidity) in steam heated houses, for without moisture in the air, most plants have slim chances of survival. In taking up the matter of "watering", I would like to mention several types of watering, giving some of the pros and cons of each.

1. Watering by Constant Water-Level: An article appeared in the last issue of this magazine giving this type of watering. I am wondering how many of our readers gave it a try. I would like to caution those who are using this to use extreme care when plants are transferred from the dry air of the steam heated house to the open porch. Out of doors the plants absorb a certain amount of moisture through both the leaves and the walls of the porous pots; hence, less water is required through the medium of capillary watering. If the pots have been "sunk in sand" indoors, the chances are that merely resting the pots on the sand when transferred to the porch may be sufficient . . . Or, in the case of a prolonged damp spell, water may be withheld for several days. The main thing is to keep the soil ball damp only. (not wet.) If small pots are used, one may find it necessary to have them more than 1 inch above the water-level. Many plants in a given area tend to increase humidity and therefore less water will be needed. Also, the size and condition of plant will make a difference as to the amount of water consumed in a given time. Never water an ailing plant in this way! !

a. Peat moss? Should one incorporate peat moss in the potting mixture? Some peat moss is usually needed in the potting mixture. The amount of peat depends largely on the type of soil used. If one has heavy soil, peat is needed to break it up and make it more porous so that the fine roots will penetrate it more readily. Use less peat with a sandy loam as water travels more rapidly through this type of soil than it does through a heavy soil. Mine is a sandy loam put up by a local nurseryman with cow manure, bone meal and any other enriching they may put in it. To 2 parts of this I add  $\frac{1}{2}$  part of peat and  $\frac{1}{2}$  part of coarse sand. Peat holds many times its weight in water and therefore is invaluable for holding moisture during winter months when fur-

nace heat is on and particularly when plants are watered from the saucer. It also has great value in making the soil porous and so permitting the air to reach the root system and prevents the soil from caking. It is most important in plant care that sufficient oxygen reaches the root system.

2. Wick watered plants: This is also a form of capillary watering. Practically the same holds true as with constant water-level watering. Here again you may use the same soil mixture including the peat. Wicks can be used with either glazed or porous pots. More care must be taken however not to overwater if glazed pots are used. In both cases, allow to dry out occasionally, letting the reservoir remain empty a day or so before refilling. It takes more time to "dry out" the soil in a glazed pot if overwatered whereas with the porous pot, much moisture is lost to the air through the walls of the pot. So, one must use their judgment as conditions vary. The amount of sunny weather, cloudy or damp spells and whether or not a plant is in active growth or resting, all make a difference as to the amount of water consumed in a given time.

3. Plants watered from saucer: This is in a manner, a kind of capillary watering. It is most important to have peat in this potting mixture as the plant is not drawing constantly on a regular supply of water. However, do not have water standing constantly in saucer. Water with warm water from the saucer and allow the plant to remain until the top soil begins to show moisture. Then, throw the excess water out and water again only when the top soil begins to feel dry to the touch. It may be necessary to have more peat with plants watered in this way especially during the winter months.

I would like to mention difficulties which are apt to crop up from over watering and you will note from illustrations just what to look for in making this diagnosis.

Over a year ago I was obliged to leave my plants to the care of another during a three week vacation. At that time, capillary watering was somewhat new to me. When I left, the plants were beginning to bloom and had many buds. Glowing accounts were sent me while away of the condition of my plants, but alas, upon my return what greeted me!! The crowns of my largest plants were nearly gone; not like a crown rot for all the large leaves and main stem were firm. (there was no wilting.) But, the tiny leaves about the center of the crown turned to a sickly green or yellow and some of them a grey. (these last were dead.) I pulled some out with

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Stems on some plants become twisted and cease growing. Note the way leaves lie flat and on top of one another.



Leaves of center plant gone. Plant throwing out suckers on the side of main stem.



Note the distorted leaves, also the new crown forming.

# The African Violet Magazine

## A Timely Warning - .. ... Overwatering continued from page 32

tweezers to give the new growth a chance. And, some of the leaves in the center appeared quite hairy and some twisted and misshapen. Consulting a local greenhouse, I was told it was the cyclamen mite and promptly gave them the hot water bath. That was a year and a half ago.

This fall I experienced the same thing but was on the spot myself, however, and recognizing it early in the game, was determined to trace it down. After consulting one or two authorities, I suspected overwatering as the cause. It was too late to catch some of my largest plants as the center crowns were pretty far gone. Some of the others however, large and small were caught in the early stages and have responded to treatment. If one suspects overwatering, remove plant at once to a saucer where it can be watered individually and kept a bit on the dry side until nursed back to health when it can be returned to its former type of watering but this time watered with caution!! In a case such as the above, one must pick out the affected leaves from the center crown with tweezers but with great care. If the very center bud head has not been destroyed, the plant will form a new crown in the same place. But, if the original bud head has been destroyed, suckers will grow out from the sides of the main stem but the plant will never be as shapely as it was before. If one has sentiment about the plant and it is extra choice, these suckers can be cut off and rooted. If one keeps the Saintpaulia as a hobby and has a lot of time, these plants can be nursed back to health. If raising Saintpaulias is mainly a hobby, there is a satisfaction in doing it. On the other hand, if one is selling plants, they begrudge the space an ailing plant takes up and the time it takes to bring it back. With this particular trouble, there is no danger of keeping these plants next to others as there would be with mites and mealy bugs. But, first make sure that the trouble is overwatering. Do not confuse it with either the mite or stunt as the symptoms appear quite the same. The above diagnosis was confirmed by our State Experiment Station. Also, a plant was sent to the U. S. Station at Beltsville, Maryland and the report was returned, "Overwatering. No evidence of mite".

It has been said that African Violets, unlike most other house plants, do better if overpotted. This may be true when watered from the saucer with plant in a porous pot. If these get too wet they can easily be dried out. It is however so easy to get plants too wet in too large a pot!!

The earth ball should be kept damp but not wet. In caring for plants, keen observation is necessary from day to day. It's a case of "a stitch in time saves nine". Catch any plant ailments at the start. It is easier to prevent trouble than to cure it if it once gets started. So, be alert to your plants' requirements and catch any before they gain headway.

## Mite, Water Bath, and Selenate continued from page 27

be discarded, others, less far advanced but infested nevertheless, will only serve to spread the mite further. Killing all the mites is the only real solution.

Of course, as more and more plants purchased from selenating growers find their way into collections losses will be smaller. But most collections consist of a few purchased plants and many home propagated plants, propagated either by the collector herself or her friends (that is one of the fascinations of the hobby). The home propagated plants at present have no protection and are quickly overwhelmed by the mite when ill-luck introduces it.

I am somewhat apprehensive that certain commercial growers are either careless in their application of selenate or are using excessive quantities as some plants I have purchased this past summer have shown the leaf distortion which I now associate with over-selenation. I have not seen leaf distortion in normally treated plants, but have seen it in over-selenated ones. If leaf distortion, this is characteristic of over-selenation, then plants showing it reflect bad greenhouse practice that careful purchasers will not long tolerate.

Eventually a better anti-mite material will probably be developed. It is difficult to imagine one more effective or simpler to use. Elimination of bad effects on plants of any age and substitution of a non-poisonous material are much to be desired. But, until such a substance is made available, let's give Dr. Blauvelt the credit he deserves for devising the method for eliminating the worst enemy the African Violet has had to date.

Automatic watering for your African Violets. Send 45¢ for one Glaswik, holder, saucer and instructions. 3 for \$1.25 postpaid. Use your own pot. System recommended by Dr Post of Cornell. Remarkable results.

ATLAS ASBESTOS COMPANY  
Box AV North Wales, Pa.



Dear Saintpaulia Admirers, Feasterville, Penn.  
February 28, 1949.

Recently, I have been exceeding my allotted page space and in an endeavor to be concise I shall fall into line at once. This is the opportunity I have been awaiting, to publicly thank Helen Van Pelt Wilson for the enthusiasm created in both our Society and Homing Pigeon Department by her enjoyable Women's Day article (Nov. issue). It, I know, has greatly increased our enrollment of members. Sooooo, to our newcomers - "Welcome to our covey"!

Next is a word of warning. As I have had the pleasure of reading Introductory letters, I note there are but few people whose families consist of neither children nor pets. Therefore, when Gene Bowman wrote that their family cat and dog ate violet blooms and leaves respectively, it gave me considerable worryment. And while I have cautioned him on allowing them to continue, I also want to inform the public of the danger, too. Today, practically all of our Saintpaulias are treated with insecticides to act as a preventative to disease and pests. Sodium Selenate is commonly used to immune plants to many insects, but I wonder if we all realize it is poisonous and these treated plants should be kept out of reach of little hands and inquisitive tongues. . .

Topic #2: Many garden clubs are introducing the African Violet hobby into hospitals. Dalene Rhodes has been periodically donating to tubercular patients; in addition there are many other staunch contributors - two of whom I wish to go into detail about: Browns' & Sons of Newman, Ga. and Harvey Cox of Long Beach, Calif. Recently I received an unsolicited letter from Mrs. Robt. Brown suggesting a similar plan and one that could be adopted by our Homing Pigeon Dept. with the reciprocants being hospitalized veterans. Soon afterwards, I received a letter from Mr. Cox along the same channel informing me of his efforts. And thus, we have willing workers - why not organize?

First, we are in need of a name for this club, which we shall sponsor. I am perfectly willing to consider suggestive titles, tho' I do believe an appropriate one to be the "HARVEY - BROWN CLUB" in as much as these are the ones responsible for our organizing. A committee will be appointed and periodically reports will be included in our Magazine - that is, if our readers are behind us and give the necessary support!

We desire names of Veteran Hospital's conveniently located to Pigeon members and trust the latter will render aid. Contribution of plants by generous commercial growers, clubs and individuals will be graciously accepted. And gifts of violet books, subscriptions to flower magazines



and membership in our Society will supply the boys with reference material. Therefore, please consider this letter as an "SOS" and I shall gladly receive any data pertaining to our project.

Now, for a quick flash for our Canadian friends - many of whom will be delighted to learn that Mrs. C. A. Ray (Glenburnie Rd.) and Mrs. B. J. Ewens (Box 101) both of Port Credit, Ontario are partners in selling and shipping 46 named varieties of our most popular house plant. I extend my best wishes to both the growers and their customers.

In conclusion, may I also inform you that Mrs. Carl Olson of West Grove, Pa. is offering a "holder" suitable for our Society booklet; made of plywood and neatly trimmed. It retails for \$2.50 and I offer the report in reply to your inquiries. My method may not be as attractive to the eye, but also answers the purpose. I use a standard size, three-hole note book. And, as I receive the quarterly I open it to the middle, carefully remove the staples, divide the magazine into two sections allowing me to punch three spaced holes. Then, I compile the pages again, insert the staples and have my magazine in the same condition as upon its receipt. If you have "suggestions", won't you share them, too?

Trusting that we may all meet at our Cincinnati Convention, I remain -

Sincerely yours,  
ELSIE CROASDALE FREED  
(Conductress)

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## Collecting Then and Now

continued from page 10

had cleared the roads and started to get out the car. My husband exclaimed: "You surely aren't going that distance in this weather just to get some violets!"

A friend and I arrived at the Yoars home to be greeted by Mrs. Yoars as she swept out a huge drift and gayly called "I didn't expect you this kind of weather!" and we answered, "You know these violet fans!"

We introduced ourselves and went into her violet house. We stood in awe and amazement. Row after row, hundreds and hundreds of violets in all sizes met our gaze. A riot of color greeted us, from the palest blush to pink and reds; from blues to deep purples, and my friend whispered, "It's a violet factory."

We had a lovely visit. We would say to Mrs. Yoars. "Do you have so and so?" We would all go to one end of the house and look at it, then we would ask for another variety and away we would go to the other end of the house and look at it. Back and forth we went, looking at this one, stopping to chat about the virtues of one variety or other, discussing soils, fertilizers, new varieties, the national convention.

The shadows grew long, the light dimmed and, looking at my watch, I gasped. Five o'clock! Mrs. Yoars hurriedly packed our purchases, we got in the car and waved a reluctant good-bye, promising to come again soon. We slipped and slid over the sixty miles of icy roads, home to an anxious husband and son but perfectly happy, for nestled close to the heater in the back of the car was a box of lovely new African Violets, varieties that I had never owned before.

## African Violets

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Staff

Alma Wright, Editor  
4030 McCalla Ave. Knoxville 15, Tenn.  
Mary Parker, Co-Editor  
Harrill Hills, Knoxville 18, Tenn.  
Assistant Editors  
Elsie Freed  
Boyce M. Edens  
Arthur Chard  
News Reporters — Emily Hoden,  
Harriet F. Lawton, Regina Gottshall  
Maxine Wangberg, Warren Gottshall

Mrs. Robert Wright, President  
4030 McCalla Avenue  
Knoxville 15, Tennessee.

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3334 Orion  
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Mr. William E. Merkel, 2nd V.-Pres.  
1238 Maple  
Mentor, Ohio.

Mrs. Martin Wangberg, Recording Sec.  
1920 West 3rd Street  
Perry, Iowa.

Mrs. Frank Pochurek, Corres. Sec.  
14225 McCracken Road  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. Warren E. J. Gottshall, Treasurer  
Box 901  
Alexandria, Virginia.

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*The Editor Says:*

Dear Members: Your next magazine will be Volume 3 Number 1, and it will be mailed out to you about September 1 to 10. Please give your copy time to reach you before notifying the editor you have not received it. The magazine is sent to all members as 3rd class matter . . . 3rd class mail travels more slowly.

As the envelopes for each issue must be addressed a month in advance the Society should have immediate notice of your change of address.

We are most deeply grateful to those of you who wrote in and gave assistance in locating the "lost members". Please look the names over in this issue and let us hear from you. We are most anxious to send them their copies of the magazine.

To mention only a few . . . for the September magazine John M. Good will show in pictures and tell us about his duPont Violets. Rose Hahn has contributed a story in pictures showing attractive containers to display plants in. Members of our regular staff will have their usual fine articles, and there will be many other informative and useful features too.

Do send in those articles and share your successes and failures with your African Violet Society friends.

How wonderful it was to see so many of you in Cincinnati! Don't forget the articles you promised to write . . .

Most Sincerely,

Alma Wright

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please contact Mr. Floyd L. Johnson, 964 Whittier Road, Spencerport, New York for advertising information.

He is the advertising manager for the African Violet Magazine.

Advertising rates are \$3.00 per column inch.

Cover Design: Mr. Good's duPont Blue number 5 in 3 inch pot.

When writing to the members of the magazine staff please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.



# The Presidents Message

## Membership



The President's message this time is really a message from Mr. Warren E. J. Gottshall, Treasurer of The African Violet Society of America, Incorporated. He wishes to advise:

THAT local organizations are permitted to retain fifty-cents (50¢) of the national African Violet Society of America, Inc. dues for each member of their organization who is also a member of the National Society.

THAT remittance of the \$2.50 due the National Society, shall be forwarded by either the Treasurer or Secretary of the local organization.

THAT the retaining of the fifty-cents (50¢) applies to both new memberships and renewals.

THAT memberships in the National Society are only two classes, "Individual" or "Sustaining".

THAT Individual Memberships will be accepted in one name only.

THAT only the person whose name appears on the "membership card" is a member of the Society and only the person so named will be allowed the privileges of the Convention and Annual Meeting.

THAT memberships applied for in the name of a local organization shall have only one representative and one vote at the Annual Meeting.

THAT the ONLY exception being that Husband or Wife may attend the Convention and Annual Meeting on the Individual Membership Card of the other, Only one shall have voting privileges.

It was indeed gratifying to see such a fine representation at the Annual Meeting in Cincinnati. Details of the business transacted, and further reports of the splendid program will be in the September issue of the African Violet Magazine.

Cordially,

Your President,

Alma Wright



## BRIEF GUIDANCE

Helen Van Pelt Wilson

(Published thru the courtesy of M. Barrows & Co., Inc., publishers of Miss Wilson's revised edition of "African Violets".)

Here then is a ten-point program which, faithfully followed, is known to produce fairly constant bloom on saintpaulias:

1. In winter, place plants preferably at east or north windows. Avoid strong sunlight.
2. In summer, place plants at north windows, kept open for long periods, or on a lightly shaded porch.
3. Maintain a house temperature of seventy to seventy-two degrees with no more than a ten-degree drop at night.
4. Maintain a fresh atmosphere, but in avoiding closeness, be mindful of the dangers of chilling.
5. Water from the saucer with room-temperature water. Apply enough each morning to be absorbed by early afternoon.
6. Make special provisions for humidity if the air in the house is noticeably dry, or if temperatures incline to rise much above seventy degrees. Those who have humidifiers in their homes find that their "violets" benefit as much as they do.
7. To remove dust and stimulate new growth, spray foliage occasionally - - once a week or less, depending on how fast dust collects. A house plant syringe will do the trick. Be sure to use room-temperature water. If water is much colder or warmer than the surrounding air, spotting of foliage may result.
8. Sterilize or fumigate the soil used for saintpaulias. This will keep roots free of nematodes, which is essential health insurance. Sterilize also all pots, saucers, flats, and the plant shelves which come in contact with your saintpaulias. It's those fast-traveling mites you're after now.
9. Decide on the mite deterrent you will use - Optox, N. N. O. R., or other spray, hot water bath, or sodium selenate soil treatment. Notice it is a deterrent we are talking about, not a cure. Treat healthy plants; then you won't have to nurse sick ones.
10. Beware of strangers. Isolate all new plants for two months before introducing them to your treasured collection. In that time you can spot mite and, if necessary, deal with it or discard one plant. Your saintpaulia family will not have been contaminated by the newcomer.



# TRANSPLANTING AID

Helen Pochurek

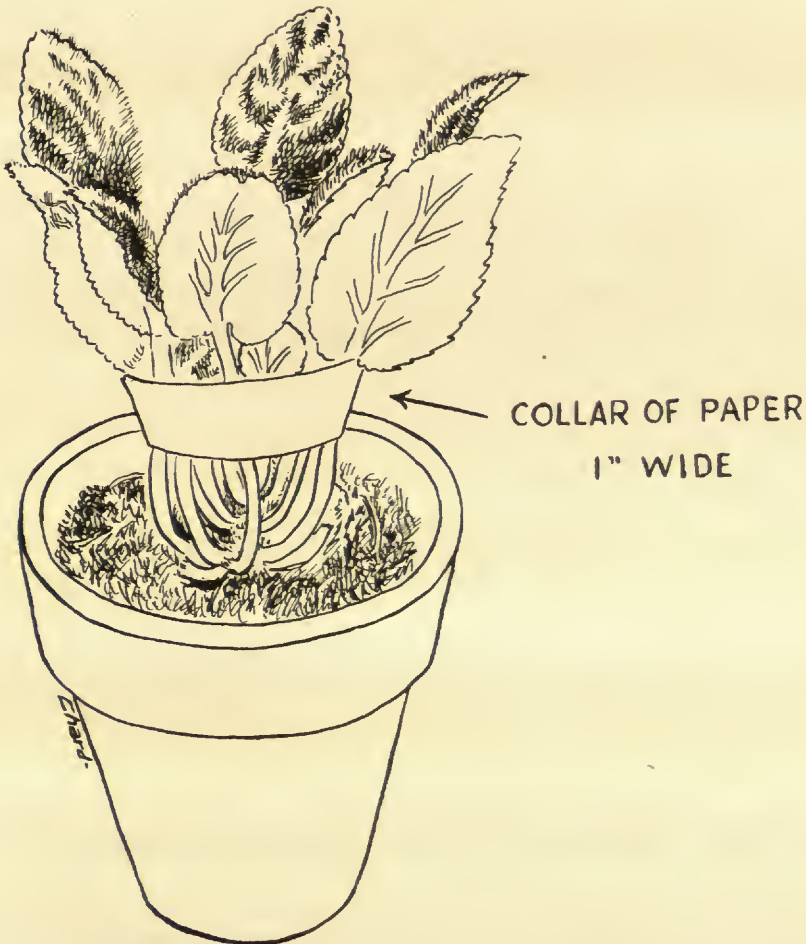
Illustrated by Arthur Chard

One thing I have found to be of help in transplanting plants is to make a little collar of paper (one inch wide) to hold the leaves up, as illustrated below. In this manner, the strain is taken off the plant while it is recovering from the shock of being transplanted.

Lift the leaves up gently, place the paper collar carefully around the petioles,

clip, pin, or fasten the ends with Scotch tape.

The collar may be left on for a month or so, depending upon the condition of the plant. When the collar is removed, if the foliage is more upright than you like, the leaves will soon flatten out when the plant is placed in the proper exposure.



# THRIPS

(Reported by Regina and Warren Gottshall)

Illustrations by Arthur G. Chard

(We are greatly indebted to the following for their assistance, and acknowledge with appreciation all the information and experiences that made this writing possible:—Dr. Floyd F. Smith and Dr. Freeman Weiss (USDA, Beltsville, Md.), Mr. Evan P. Roberts (School of Agriculture, Michigan State College), Dr. Stanley F. Bailey (University of California), Mrs. Ruth Sillers, Mrs. Annette Scully, Mr. W. D. Holley, the members of Homing Pigeon #4, and those mentioned individually in this report. We are especially indebted to Mr. Arthur G. Chard for all his research and the splendid accompanying illustrations.)

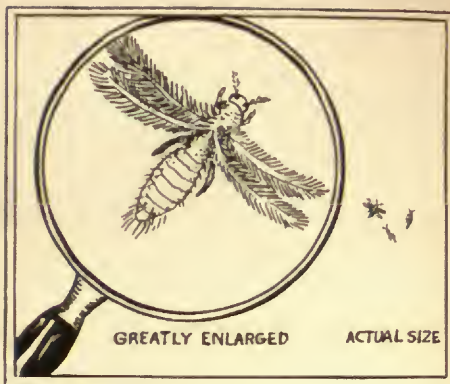
## THE INSECT AND ITS EVIDENCE

Saintpaulias would seem to be the special "banquet fare" of some of the most destructive and injurious insects to attack the plant world. Devastation of many plants or whole collections by cyclamen mite, mealy bug, or nematodes is not quite enough to contend with - to these pests we must add THRIPS.

"Thrips is a relatively new insect, noticed first in 1929 in Ohio and Ontario, Canada. Its more than 1600 known species", writes Helen Connell, "has been rapidly distributed throughout North America." The Banded Greenhouse Thrips, *Hercinothrips femoralis* (belonging to the order Thysanoptera, meaning bristle-wings) would seem to be the most important species for growers and collectors to worry about, for, in addition to Saintpaulias, they are known to attack many greenhouse plants - among them, amaryllis, buddleia, calla, chrysanthemum, gardenia, and begonia. However, the popular varieties of many garden flowers that are cut and brought into our houses are also subject to various thrips and caution should be taken in this direction.

The gladiolus thrips *Taeniothrips simplex* (distinguished by the white band appearing at the base of the wing bars) can do extreme damage to a gladiolus and the lovely blooms of the hemerocallis. In addition to these, greenhouses are frequent hosts to the onion and tobacco thrips *Thrips tabaci*. Some species of thrips attack only the foliage of a plant while others prey upon the flowers. They feed on both upper and lower surfaces of leaves; both mature and unfolding; and on flowers and in the bud.

Unlike the cyclamen mite, thrips can be seen quite plainly through a magnifying glass as the winged adults range from 1/20 to 1/8 of an inch in size, appearing something like small aphids or plant lice, but more slender, and usually grey, brown, or black in color (depending upon species), instead of green. They have feather-like



wings (two pair, very slender, having long hairs around their margins), but move mostly by running, which they do very rapidly. Due to their activity, it is frequently rather difficult to keep them in view under a hand glass.

The evidence of thrips on Saintpaulia leaves is seen first in numerous whitish spots, where the juices of the leaf have been sucked out. These spots show in the beginning more plainly on the lower surface. As attack goes on, the spots spread, forming blotches, dead areas appear around the edges of the leaf, the foliage wilts, and finally drops off. Thrips begin their work by scraping the surface so as to break the leaf-cells and exhaust the sap, leaving a dead spot. When these dead spots become sufficiently numerous, the leaf fails to fulfill its function and dies, or becomes only a burden to the plant. The whitish appearance of the injured surface is due to the dead walls of the ruptured cells and the air within and later changes to a "rusty" color as the spot dies. The surface may also be discolored by the small specks of reddish excrement (later turning black) voided by the thrips.

Blooms that have been attacked are characterized by white streaks (especially noticeable on the blue or dark shades, and due to the constant rasping or scraping of the insect as they remove the surface to get at the cell sap) and by premature dropping of buds or flowers (due to the self-pollination of the flower by the action of the thrips) and frequently shortened or distorted petals. It must be emphasized, however, that blooms which occasionally bear white streaks, especially in the autumn of the year, or at a season when there are radical changes in the temperature, need not necessarily be hosts to thrips. Unequal distribution of coloring pigment during these times is merely due to climatic variations. Also, plants that drop flowers or buds prematurely and show none of the other characteristics of thrips infestation may be suffering from gas, too low humidity, or lack of fresh air. Some sources also claim that an overabundance of nitrogen in the soil can cause premature dropping of blooms; especially immediately after watering. On the other hand, should the other "symptoms" also be present (malformed flowers, premature dropping of blooms and bud, and the white stripes)



it is wise to suspect thrips and take steps immediately to isolate and begin an intensive spraying program.

"A good indication of this insect" writes Mrs. John P. Murray, "is a violet which seems to be dropping its bloom immediately upon opening. If a bloom is pinched off and pulled apart, the little insects can be seen scurrying around right under the 'eye' of the violet. You do not always find the pests in every bloom, so it is well to check several if you are suspicious of the plant."

Several sources attribute infestation to hot, dry atmosphere; at least the development, spread, and multiplication of the insect is definitely more rapid under these conditions. Care should be taken, therefore, to see that proper humidity is attained; which in turn will aid in keeping down the temperature through the process of evaporation; and do not allow the plants to become too dry.

Grass and weeds are a common breeding place for thrips. The larvae hatch in about a week to pale yellow, or milky white, nymphs from kidney-shaped eggs laid in growing plant tissues. Their color changes in later nymphal stages to lemon, or salmon, or orange, with the life-cycle completed by transformation to the dark colored adult in two to four weeks (depending upon the temperature). Immature thrips appear to be smeared with black dried coating or they carry a droplet of black liquid on the back. This material is excretory and is apparently carried as a protection against enemies. After completing their feeding period they spend four or five days in folded young leaves, between plant stems, or between lumps of soil until they transform to adults. It is the young, in the nymphal or pupa stage, that does most of the harm to the plant or bloom, though at both stages they feed upon plant tissues. Some thrips are carnivorous and eat other insects such as mites (but the importation of thrips to combat mite is not recommended by the authors).

"Thrips", Mr. Holley states, "come into the house via new plants primarily. Many propagators do not use sufficient regular control measures so that there are a few of the insects present on the plants which they send out. Once thrips are in the house, there are good conditions for their multiplication and it is an easy matter for them to spread from one plant to another." Plants or flowers brought in from the garden can also be culprits.

### PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Our first bit of personal experience with thrips was furnished by Mrs. Martha Husted when she told us of the variety Myrtle that had been infested from an amaryllis. The leaves of this plant became limp and the markings appeared chiefly upon the undersides of the leaf blades. The whitish nymphs were clearly discernible through a hand glass. As a control she used a warm water dip containing an oil base DDT with disastrous results for the leaves were burned within three hours, apparently from the oil. (This supposition became factual when Dr. Weiss wrote that

"the aerosol bombs intended for household insects would probably be hazardous to use on plants because they contain oil solvents that are injurious to plants").

Mrs. Husted's second experience was with the so-called "pollen thrips". (Dr. Smith writes that he has had a rumor of such a thrips attacking Saintpaulias but to date had been unable to obtain specimens to determine whether or not they were a known species). In this case the fallen blooms and buds were noticed to have a small pin-hole in the anther and a flick of the fingernail dislodged the insect and cause it to emerge. In this instance NNOR was used at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon to the quart of warm water; the plants dipped and the solution then allowed to drop onto the soil. After dipping the plant was placed in the dark for a few days. Not only did this treatment appear to eliminate the thrips but also seemed to be most beneficial to the plant itself. This second attack was traced to gladioli brought into the house.

Floyd Johnson, however, doubts that Saintpaulias are also prey of the gladiolus thrips when he writes, "A planting of between seven and nine thousand bulbs produced not a flower - all on account of thrips. These gladioli were all planted on the east side of the house and the African violets were at open windows on the same side but on the second floor. Not a single violet was affected but every plant large enough to bloom did so. There were also infested glads in the house for a few days."

(NOTE - The failure of the gladiolus thrips to attack his violets may have been due to the possibility that thrips cannot fly, or hop, that far or that high. However, their smallness might make them "airborne" in a fairly strong breeze).

Eloise Ellsworth had unknowingly received an infested violet from a source that was known to have thrip infested gloxinias. Failure to isolate this new plant made possible the spread of the insects to her favored duPonts. "I first noticed", she writes, "a rusty strip (similar to the underside of the stem which rubs on the pot) along the petiole close to the crown. Under a magnifying glass I finally saw a black speck move after I had touched it with a toothpick - how it did run!" NNOR was used, but in this case as a spray applied twice at the prescribed intervals and strength and the duPonts isolated. "The 'rusty stuff' has disappeared and the leaves are now beautifully shiny-green."

### PREVENTIVES AND CONTROL

In addition to the above mentions of NNOR being an effective combatant of thrips, there have been several other preparations recommended. Mr. Carl Peterson advises Sodium Selenate as a cure and goes on further to state that "if a Sodium Selenate capsule is dissolved in two gallons of water instead of one gallon (as per directions), then it is safer for home use and plants can be watered once a week with this solution, instead of once in three or four weeks." Ethel Crotty has used the Peterson prescription twice a week on a friend's mite infested plants and she states, they suffered no ill effects and the mites have been eliminated.



*a*



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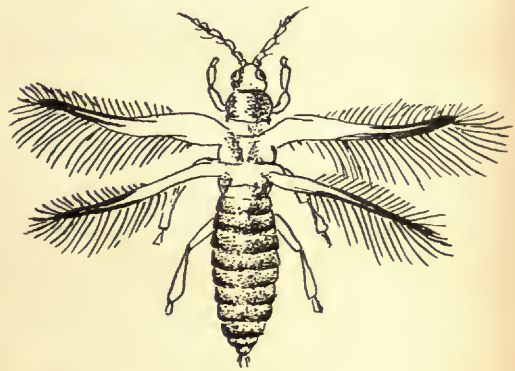
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4

*B*



*c*



*D*



*E*



*F*



Another recommendation comes from the Division of Entomology and Parasitology of the University of California when Dr. Bailey writes, "Among the newer insecticides which are very effective against thrips are BHC (Benzine Hexa Chloride) or the phosphates, especially tetraethyl pyro-phosphate. These materials are largely replacing nicotine and pyrethrum which, however, are still effective against this type of pest. Two applications about 10 days apart are usually desired to kill the larvae which hatch out later. Better results are obtained by the use of wet sprays rather than with dusts, especially if the thrips are in the flowers and growing points."

DDT, sprays and powders, have been suggested by Drs. Smith and Weiss and the latter goes on to say that they are effective when used according to the manufacturers' directions for general garden insect control, but repeated and thorough coverage is necessary. Dr. Weiss also offers tobacco dust on the foliage and surface of the ground, or spraying the plants several times at intervals of 5 to 10 days with Black Leaf 40 and soap solution (2 teaspoons of Black Leaf 40 and 1 tablespoon of soap powder to one gallon of water).

"One of the best preventive measures against thrips" advises Dr. Weiss, "is to use fumigated soil for potting plants; chloropicrin, DD, methyl bromide, or other fumigants that destroy all kinds of insect pests. It is possible to carry out some of these soil fumigation treatments at home, using DD (manufactured by the Shell Oil Co., and the Dow Chemical Co.), but one can usually buy treated soil from greenhouse operators at much less expense - certainly with less time and effort."

Parathion (Thio-plus or 3422), "the new wonder insecticide", has the recommendation of both Mr. W. E. Holley and Mr. Evan Roberts. Mr. Holley also informs us that "it is best used as a spray or dip and will control mealybugs and mites as well and is absolutely safe on African violets if directions are followed." Mr. Roberts suggests the "use of 1 teaspoon 25% wettable parathion to one gallon of warm water" and that the precautions on the container be followed.

(CAUTION - Word lately received is to the effect that Parathion is extremely poisonous, comparable to sodium selenate or nicotine sulfate, and that care should be taken not to breathe the fumes or dust, and additional care should be taken to avoid getting the material on the skin. Until complete tests are made on this product, it is not generally recommended for amateur use, or home use - especially in the kitchen (unless there is a good kitchen fan to take off the fumes and even then a mask should be used). In the greenhouse it may be used, if a mask is used as a precaution against inhaling the fumes. Outdoors it should be sprayed "with the wind" so that the residue is carried away from the persons doing the spraying. It is further suggested that about  $\frac{1}{8}$  ounce

(KEY to the illustrations)

- A. Eggs of the Thrips
- B. 1. First stage larva (actual color white with red eyes)  
2. Second stage larva  
3. Third stage or prepupa (color orange)  
4. True pupa with wing pads
- C. Adult Thrips - *Euthrips tricti*
- D. Adult Thrips showing fringed wings
- E. Thrips injury to African violet blossom (marked)
- F. Thrips injury to African violet leaf (marked)

of Parathion 15% per gallon of warm water be used on only a few plants to determine their tolerance to this material and to insure proper mixing of the parathion and water. If used as a dip a few minutes immersion should be all that is necessary. The general precautions, usual to other poisons, should be exercised. Keep out of reach of children or animals.)

Aside from the above it is suggested that, if thrips are present, pinching off all the buds and blooms will destroy a lot of the insects. This is rather a heart-breaking and drastic action (especially if we have been waiting for months for the plant to come into flower) but it would be a good means of getting rid of the thrips hidden in the folded buds if a thorough dipping is not practiced.

Optox has been used according to directions by Mrs. Murray who sprayed every three days for a period of six weeks. However, at the end of that time she was still finding an "occasional bug". In desperation her "kill or cure" method was to prepare a pail of lukewarm Optox solution and submerge pot, plant and all for about a minute or two. For awhile it was a touch-and-go proposition (the solution may have been too strong for the roots), but the plants snapped out of it and came into bloom with no sign of thrips.

Whatever method is used, it must be remembered to use it thoroughly and consistently. A mere pump of the spray or light powdering of the dust is not sufficient. Neither should the top of the soil be neglected if one wants to eliminate the nymphs there. Dr. Weiss sums it up very nicely when he states that "one of the best safeguards against thrip trouble in violets is to use only treated soil for potting plants; being careful in selecting new plants and then isolating them before adding them to one's collection; in short, prevention is worth a lot more than cure."

# SEASONAL CARE FOR SAINTPAULIAS

Regina and Warren Gottshall

Proper care of the African violet does not necessitate an involved or complicated program. Neither are they untouchables or special pets to be pampered and shielded. On the other hand the mere purchasing, watering, and feeding is not quite sufficient. Saintpaulias are plants and as such are subjected to certain laws of Nature. Not being a humdrum affair of sameness, Nature is constantly changing into four Seasons. These various Seasons demand a special task of all growing things. African violets, having as their original habitat a temperate or sub-tropic zone, are not subjected to radical Seasonal changes; nor are they adaptable to them. They are, therefore, by Nature, not perennials hardy to extremes of temperature. The fact that their popular appeal has transplanted them into a climate not their own and into the unnatural conditions of our homes, necessitates slight variations in their care. Let us then take them through the year's cycle, beginning with the Season of horticultural birth or rebirth.

## SPRING CARE

This is the Season claimed by some to be the trickiest of the four - others have their difficulties during Winter. Summer and Fall also draw complaints. One is no more difficult than the other, once you understand their particular conditions that must be counteracted, or alleviated, and heed this understanding. Spring is the Season for rot to play havoc with some collections. Why? Rot is a deterioration and decay of growth tissues brought about by an over-abundance of the most necessary compound - water. Thus a necessity can also become an evil.

Our furnaces are suddenly shut off and the windows thrown open to admit a surge of fresh air. Spring rains naturally burden the air by increasing its moisture content, and evaporation diminishes with the rise in humidity. It is only a natural conclusion that when evaporation is cut down, its replacement, via the watering can or hose, is not required as frequently, or in as large amounts. A plant's absorption of water from the soil is nominal to that lost by evaporation. So with the advent of Spring, we must get over our Winter's habit of Monday-Wednesday-Friday waterings, the tablespoonful every day, or whatever our personal habit may have been. Water should be applied sparingly for a few weeks; at least until the plants become adjusted to the change in atmosphere.

It is usually as simple as that. On the other hand, the soil should not be allowed to become excessively dry at any time, as this condition will cause a drooping of the leaves. If caught in time, this lack of water need not be fatal to the plant. However, when the plant again becomes turgid with water the weight of the leaves may prevent their reaching their

normal upright or right-angle position natural to their variety, and an unnatural drooping results - in the older leaves at least. These leaves may then rot where they come into contact with the moisture exuding lip of the pot, unless braced, or the rim dipped into paraffin or covered with aluminum foil. Some soil mixtures that have been allowed to become excessively dry may never get wet to the surface when placed in water. Should this occur, water should be added at the top of the pot, for then the action of evaporation will draw water into the soil.

At any Season, it is generally advisable to thoroughly moisten the soil at least once a week (unless the proper moisture content of the soil can be kept at all times), but they should not be kept soaking; the pot should then be allowed to drain off all excess moisture. This draining process sucks air back into the soil just as the complete saturation has forced much of it out. Air is a must and one of the prime factors why many people add vermiculite to their potting soil is that this product acts as a storage reservoir for air and water.

Complete and occasional saturation of the soil is not necessary for growth of the plant, but it has its compensations. Plant roots naturally need water. If only the bottom half of a potful of soil is moistened the roots will find it, but then the roots spread out where this moisture is available. At the top of the pot there are none, and we then wonder why our plants become wobbly and subject to snapping off from a careless jolt or touch. It is merely because there are no roots near the surface of the soil to securely anchor the plant. If you insist in watering only half of your soil, it is far more advisable to apply this water from the top, so that a foothold can be developed. However, this is applicable to all four Seasons, and it is Spring we are considering.

Our main concern with this Season is not to over-water. Another thing to be taken into consideration is the increase in warmth and brilliance of the Sun. Plants that did beautifully during the Winter in a Southern exposure will now begin to need some protection - curtains of any sort that will temper the Sun's rays must be used - or the foliage will take on a bleached, yellowed complexion. Spring merely demands a temporary decrease in water, protection from the Sun, and a rehabilitation program where necessary.

Most of our plants that have been established for a year or more will have exhausted the food supply of the soil. (If they have been fed regularly on a commercial fertilizer, there may be an excessive accumulation of "salts" in the soil. These salts usually leech out at the top of the soil or lip of the pot and should be removed.) These plants should now be



reotted or shifted. Shifting is by far the simplest, as it calls only for a thorough moistening of the soil to hold it together. The plant with its ball of earth is then pushed from the pot and moved to the next larger size pot and fresh soil added to fill up the space. This method causes a minimum of disturbance to the roots. Repotting calls for the removal of some of the soil from the top and about the sides; probably a trimming of roots and the removal of a few leaves to balance the shortened root system. The plant can then be repotted into the same sized pot or the next larger size. (When using fertilizers, it must be remembered never to add them in quantities large enough to burn the roots. Small applications at regular intervals during the growing season are advisable.)

Propagation by leaf or offset is usually more rapid and prolific at this time of the year - unless the plants are grown in the controlled conditions of a greenhouse. Pollination may be effective at any time during the year, but seed will be found to ripen in a much shorter time if they have been fertilized during the Spring. Propagation and pollination are mentioned here, because they are indirectly involved in the care of Saintpaulias, i.e. care by perpetuation, as a few varieties do not improve with age, but rather seem to deteriorate and should be replaced.

### SUMMER CARE

The days are lengthened into Summer by an increase in the intensity of light and the rise in temperature. Light increases may now be diffused in all directions, except North, by the maturity of the foliage on protective trees or shrubbery. If not, the protection supplied in the Spring must be kept in use. The rising temperature will increase the evaporation from the soil. The watering program must now be stepped up and if we live in a particularly arid section, the humidity must be increased. Saintpaulias cannot tolerate temperatures much below 40 degrees or above 80 degrees, and the best way to lower the temperature about our plants during the hot Summer months is by the cooling effects derived from evaporation. Evaporation and an increase in humidity may be accomplished by several methods. Placing of containers of water among the plants is one way, and this may be improved upon by using sponges in shallow containers of water. The sponges increase the surface space from which evaporation becomes possible. Another way is to set the pots on sand or vermiculite, whether we use individual containers or trays. If using the latter method, be sure that the bases of the pots do not stand in water, except when the plants are to be watered. (A very good set-up is explained in the Vol. 2 No. 2 issue of this magazine under the title "Watering by the Constant Water-Level", and again in Vol. 2 No. 3.)

African violets may be at the end of their blooming span at this time of year, but whenever this condition arises, the feeding of extra nutriment should be withheld until new growth and/or the re-

forming of buds has begun. Plants that have been shifted or repotted in the Spring will by now be taking on new life. These should be fed regularly unless a complete fertilizer was incorporated in the soil used at that time. For Summer, increase your moisture and humidity, decrease the direct rays of the Sun, and feed only growing plants.

### FALL CARE

Autumn begins the decline of the cycle, but the decrease in light intensity still does not permit our becoming careless with our exposure protections. This Season of the year is also occasioned by cooler spells, and the watering must again be less frequent. Cutting down on the water will also help to acclimate the plants to the dry conditions of our heated homes.

This season may also demand that we initiate a definite spraying program, if we have not kept one prior to this time. Perhaps our plants now take on signs of disease which we are unable to understand, as they have not been moved from their accustomed places; nor have plants from unknown sources been added. Plants can be infested, particularly during the Seasons when our windows and doors are open, as many of the insects that attack African violets can be airborne. Mite can be brought in from our gardens on our hands or blown there by the breeze. Thrip can fly the space between our onion patch or Hemerocallis plantings, or even be carried by a circulation of air, as they are so small. Our delphinium brought into the house may be the culprit. Whatever the cause, or lack of it, a regular spraying procedure is a wise precaution, if not a necessary one.

Leaves potted in the Spring should have had their plantlets separated and individually repotted in the Summer months; if not, we should put this chore off no longer. Our pots should be washed off, the containers cleaned and sterilized, and the bad or unattractive foliage removed in preparation for Winter. Forethought and preparation should also be made for the correcting of Winter conditions when they arrive. Guard against chilling drafts and sudden cold nights.

### WINTER CARE

Winter may be for many collectors the time when their plants are the most prolific in producing buds. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the Seasons are reversed from those of the violet's native home, i.e., Spring below the Equator occurs at the time when the countries to the North are in the midst of Winter. Perhaps our buds form but drop before opening or within a day or two thereafter. Perhaps they blight and dry up after barely forming. This premature dropping of bud and flower need not be due to attack by thrip (however, if other thrip symptoms are present, it would be wise to take steps toward the eradication of this insect). One of the main reasons for the undevelopment of flowers is the lack of fresh air. This deficit must be balanced or corrected if we hope to see an open blossom during

the Winter. It may necessitate the installing of ventilators, or the moving of plants to rooms where there is constant opening of doors to the outside (provided they can be protected from the draft). Fresh air MUST be supplied. Another fault may lie in the escaping of gas, either cooking gas or coal gas. The leak may have been present all through the Spring, Summer and Fall, but its effect was counteracted by the constant stirring of fresh, outside air. Blighted buds can be due to one of two causes - the plants may have been allowed to become excessively dry, or there may not be enough nutriment in the soil to develop them to maturity. The fertilizer used may not be in correct balance for the proper nourishment of Saintpaulias. Some sources now claim that an overabundance of nitrogen in the soil is the fault of a plant losing its blooms prematurely.

Artificial humidity should be continued by the method used during the Summer. Constant, even temperature night and day, as regulated by our thermostats, should be avoided. If there is controlled heat, the thermostat should be turned back every night by at least five to ten degrees to give the plants a rest and respiratory period. The plants should also be given their "bath" more regularly, as dust on them is apt to accumulate much more rapidly in a closed and furnace heated house. This dust robs the plant of the air which it naturally assimilates through its leaves, causing the plants to appear to collapse and shrink in size. Water and humidity must be stepped up, unless we have special humidifiers to counteract the dryness of the closed house.

A final care for Winter would be to assure that the plants are not subjected to chilling drafts from doors or windows, and that leaves are not in contact with cold window glass, or even placed too close to the chilling effects of the windows. Should the room in which the plants are kept become excessively chilled and the plants demand watering at this time, we should be sure to use water of room temperature. Water five to ten degrees higher, when applied to this cooler soil and container, will give off a thin vapor that will collect upon the leaves of the plant and may cause frostbite that would not be occasioned if "room temperature" water had been applied.

Saintpaulia care throughout the year simmers down to this: watering must be in accordance with the Season's demands, feed according to the extent of the plant's growth, and fresh air must be supplied at ALL times. Fresh air through proper ventilation cannot be over-emphasized. It is an absolute necessity.

When writing to the members of the magazine staff please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

## INFORMATION ! !

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Mrs. Henry Schnarr  
Mount Vernon, Ill.

Mrs. Fredrick D. Lewis  
Wesleyville, Va.

Miss Mabel Fisher,  
12 South Front St.  
Hamilton, Ohio.

Miss Frances Oxford  
704 North Chicago  
Pontiac, Michigan.

Mrs. W. D. Whaley  
2907 Logan Blvd.  
Chicago, Ill.

Mrs. H. S. Henderson  
Box 42  
Henderson, Illinois.

Miss Mabel Fisher  
121 South Froud St.  
Hamilton, Ohio.

Mrs. Louis J. Lepp  
Box 8  
Mountain City, N. C.

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Mills County  
Malvern, Ohio

Mrs. Dollie Marie Murphy, R. N.  
105 A. Oakwood Road  
Charlestown 4, W. Va.

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## AFRICAN VIOLET LEAVES

A limited supply of Jonantha Supreme (Jonantha Sport), Sky Blue Supreme \$1.00 each. Also Hybrid Seedlings, Luana, Blue Angel, Blue Beauty, Dark Eyes, Big Mike, Custard Cup (white eye) 75¢. My introductions not on the market before. 25¢ extra for packing and postage. Leaves of common varieties 20¢. Descriptions on Request.

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## ADVENTURE! AFRICAN VIOLETS FROM SEED

Martha Mears

I have often heard it said that if you want something long enough and bad enough that somehow you will get it. Now that hasn't worked with me too many times but it did with a greenhouse!

I love to grow most any flower from seed. It seems like a great adventure; from the nice fine soil in a flat, the small seed scattered in, then the daily watching for the first germination; the weeks (sometimes months and years) of daily growth. At last the reward, when the plant blossoms, and you stand and look at all its beauty and marvel that this lovely plant could come from such a tiny seed. Then you are well repaid for all your work.

An even greater adventure is to hybridize or pollinate blossoms on your own plants. There is always a possibility of creating something outstanding and even if you don't, what a pleasure it is to look on the finished product and know that it is your own. Who doesn't think that his

own child is just a little superior to the other person's?

Having had a lot of fun hybridizing roses, lilies, delphinium and amaryllis, I have looked longingly at my African Violets for years. When I would look at my over-crowded windows, though, it has always been something that I might do some day, when I got that long wished for greenhouse!

Last Winter I had a brilliant (?) idea that maybe, if I planted some seed early, I could grow the plants out in the men's greenhouse on some of the benches that were not occupied in the Summer, get them to flowering size and make some selections from them before cold weather.

I immediately started pollinating my violet blossoms, bought some seed, planted them, then my own, when ripened. I potted up the small seedlings, rooted many leaves of my older plants. How they grew in the heat and humidity of the greenhouse!

I kept branching out a little farther on the benches each week, until finally the men began to look at their place (and me) in desperation. In self-defense, they got busy and built a small greenhouse, just for me. What would I have done if they had not, for at moving time I had almost a thousand plants.

My first crosses were rather hurriedly made with little thought of the results, but I was lucky, I guess, for I have some promising seedlings from them. The seedlings from the seed that I purchased were rather a disappointment. I only had three that I cared to save from seventy-five plants. Most of them were ordinary blues not much different, and some not as good as, existing varieties.

When planting my seed, I tried various methods, equal parts of sand and peat, screened sphagnum, decayed apple wood and sand, vermiculite, and two parts of leaf mold and one of sand and I have found my preference for the latter. I have planted in flats, fruit jars, on bricks and in flower pots, and prefer the latter in this also.

Place drainage in the bottom of the pot, then a sterilized mixture of two parts leaf mold and one of sand with some fine charcoal added. The top inch of the same mixture is screened through a fine sieve. The pot is soaked in water from the bottom, then the fine seed is scattered over the top of the soil, pressed in but never covered. A piece of glass is placed over the top of the pot and a piece of paper over the glass. The pot is placed in a warm position with bottom heat preferred. Watering is best done from the bottom to keep from washing the fine seed. Never allow the surface of the soil to dry out.

I have found germination rather irregular with my seed, some plants will be showing second leaves while others are just germinating.

As soon as the seedlings show a little growth, start feeding with a Hyponex solution at the rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon to a quart of water. Keep them as warm as possible without harming them and of course in diffused light.





These are the ones I set aside with the lovely Blue Girl foliage.

I like to transplant as soon as I can handle them. This transplanting is made into small flats, using the same soil mixture as the seedling pots and spacing about two inches apart. Continue feeding and as soon as the plants have from six to eight leaves they go into individual two inch pots, using one-half standard African Violet potting soil and one-half leaf mold. From now on, with a warm place, they will make rapid growth. I should say, - most of them will, for you will find a great variation in the development of the plants. From a group of seedlings of a Blue Girl cross planted in March, I had some plants blossoming in Oct. of the same year, while some have not blossomed yet (January) and some will probably take the full year.

Now that the first excitement is over, I have settled down to planned crosses with some objectives in view. What are some of them? Larger flowers, deeper pinks, a Pink Girl with perfect foliage, a White Girl, breeding the DuPont foliage into profuse bloomers, cleaner reds and a good rose color. My aims too high? Well, you can always hope. Some of my seedlings now show promise of good breeding stock for the rose accomplishment.

Many articles have been written on how to make the actual crosses so I will not repeat it. After a cross is made, I cut a small light weight card about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch square, place a number on it, punch a hole in the corner, put a piece of thread through the hole and tie this card on the seed pod stem. I keep a book and write in it the number on the card, the name of the parents, always using the seed parent first, thus, No. 21, Blue Girl x White Lady. I leave space below each cross listed for

remarks, about germination, how planted, date, and number of plants produced. This number follows the seed and seedling through its growing period, is placed on the seed packet until planting time, marked on the pot when planted, and the seedlings retain this number until they are discarded or each plant saved receives a number or name of it's own.

This saves a lot of writing on labels and keeps your seedlings from becoming mixed. When growing several groups of seedlings, you often forget these details. You can refer to your book by number to check the parentage of the seedlings, if you wish to do any back crossing. In one group of forty seedlings with Blue Girl as seed parent, I had twenty-two plants that showed distinct Blue Girl leaf characteristics. This information is interesting to know, if not useful.

Unless the plant is seeded too heavily, it will not stop blooming, but it is better to pollinate several flowers of the same cross to take care of any mishaps or of seed that is not too viable.

Seed pods take from four to six months to ripen, but you will note a swelling of the ovary a few days after pollination to show that the cross has taken. As soon as the seed pod stem starts to shrivel, remove it from the plant and place in a small open dish to finish ripening. When the pod is dry and brittle, break it open and loosen the seed with a needle or pin, holding the pot over some container to catch the seed as they fall. Place the seed in wax paper or cellophane, fold it up, pinning or clamping the number to the package.

Some people think that, if you hold the seed for about three weeks before



planting, you will get quicker and better germination. This I have not found yet.

I have failed completely with some crosses, but I am trying again. Some pollen seems much more potent than others, especially DuPont, Lavender Pink and Gorgeous, and these two have a lot of pollen, while White Lady pollen is very scarce. While the straight DuPont crosses produce a lot of seed, so far I have had poor germination from it, - why, I do not know.

I told you about the pleasure and excitement of the finished product. Well, there was a whole group of lovely plants. I had watched their development for many months, and as they grew, noted the difference in their foliage. I set aside some of the loveliest leaves, noted the first buds form and grew all excited.

The first thing in the morning I would hurry down stairs to the greenhouse, often before dressing, to see if just one had opened. It seemed that it would take forever! Then a little color showed and as I am an impatient person, I carried the seedlings from plant to plant of my blooming violets, comparing the color of the buds, trying to decide what the color was going to be. I had one plant, a Blue Girl x

Pink Beauty cross with lovely Blue Girl foliage. The bud was so pale, and as I carried it each day to compare it to Pink Beauty buds, I was very sure that I had a perfect Pink Girl, but when it opened it was a medium blue with white on the reverse of the petals.

All is not pleasure in growing African violets from seed. The sad part was yet to come. I had to start selecting. Bench space was filling up and I could not keep them all. Sadly I went with my bucket, I picked up each plant, looked at it, trying to find some fault, and reluctantly set it down again. I finally dumped a few in the bucket, looked at the bench space, and saw that I hadn't made much room. I quit for a few days, I couldn't part with another one. New plants were demanding more space, so I had to get at this unhappy work again, to make myself be real firm, so out they went.

Many of us can have a lot of fun and pleasure with this lovely adventure, of growing violets from seed, so get busy pollinating some of your flowers. Who knows? YOU may be the one to produce that most beloved of all house plants, The Perfect African Violet.



These are the ones that I was so unhappy about discarding.

# IMPORTANCE OF SOIL

Harriet F. Lawton

In growing plants there are usually certain basic things to be dealt with. The requirements of different kinds of plants vary somewhat as to type of soil used, light, humidity, etc. But, when selecting the plant you wish to raise, read up on it all you can and then take one step at a time. If things go wrong, then do more reading or consult your State College. It is sort of a process of elimination and takes much patience, if one is to succeed, and there are many pitfalls! !

The items to be considered with most plants are:

1. Soil. (the PH -- degree of acidity or alkalinity.  
Complete analysis for amount of different elements.)
2. Gas. (Air must be free from coal gas or illuminating gas.  
Slightest trace causes trouble.)
3. Humidity.
4. Watering.
5. Light.
6. Fresh air.
7. Temperature.

These are given in the order of what I consider their importance, although others might not agree. Also, with different plants, the order of the importance of these items might change.

Start with a good basic soil. "Soil" is a tremendous study even to those who have been at it for years. There are soil testing kits on the market, but one should have a complete analysis, giving the amounts of the various elements contained in the soil, not just the PH reading for acidity or alkalinity.

In deciding on the right soil, send a sample to your State College for a complete analysis. This service is free for the asking; do make use of it. There may be too much or too little of the major elements necessary to healthy plants. If so, your college will advise you and tell you how to balance your soil to meet your needs. If one has too much of certain elements, it will lock up other elements which the plant needs and, although they may be present in the soil, they are not available for use by the plant.

In growing plants, one should work from the bottom or root system up. Healthy roots should be white, not brown or black. Such roots are either dead or diseased. One commercial grower from whom we bought plants recently, (incidentally not Saintpaulias) took up the plants and looked at the root system with great pride and referred to it as "the business end." So, one cannot expect to have healthy plants unless he obtains a "good business end" first. What will make a good root system? That varies with the kind of plant. There are certain fundamentals to be followed, as listed above, which make

for good plant growth. We hear about people with a green thumb, but such folks usually follow certain basic facts about their plant's needs, and, beyond that, some experimenting is necessary. Take one step at a time and be sure you clear this through before you go on to the next.

If one has gas in the house, that automatically checks off. In my own case, I dealt with the gas first as plants showed decided signs of gas poisoning. (Buds were very dark, almost black and dropped before opening.) After this was rectified, buds continued to drop. Plants were on a sun porch, (East and South exposure) and temperature dropped quite low at night in winter. Double windows were put on but bud drop continued. It happened that I was using soil from a very fine greenhouse so that was farthest from my mind. However, as a last resort, I had the soil tested. A complete analysis was made. It tested a PH 6.2 (too acid) and it held too high a nitrogen content or soluble salts. This last was causing the bud drop. The tops of plants were very healthy but roots did not penetrate this soil. This high nitrogen content was one cause of bud drop.

A change of soil was made. Many buds formed only to fall a day or so after opening. This was a step forward but still a bit discouraging. My last alternative of the plants' requirements was lack of fresh air, and I pinned my faith on this slender thread, as everything else had been tried.

Living in a small house with an aged person is not conducive to airing the place daily because of drafts. But, if fresh air is let in the first thing in the morning, then it is sure to be seen to and is out of the way for the day. A good way is to close the door to the plant room, open a window wide in an adjoining room for about half hour, and after the window has been closed, open the plant room door so the fresh air may circulate. Try this and see how much better you feel. Is it any wonder the plants like it? ! ! I believe this stale air could almost be compared to a form of gas poisoning, although of a lesser form. Stale air is burned up air and full of gases, but fresh air lets in oxygen which the plants need.

Now, to get back to the topic of this article, "Soil". One who is not familiar with soils can flounder around and not know just how to go about mixing the right soil for a given plant. I have found an extremely good way for a person who lacks knowledge is to first get a good basic soil after contacting your State College. Then, using that as a base upon which to build, make up small amounts of your own mixtures, numbering each and, keeping a record of the contents of each. I have made about seven in all, numbering them "one" to "seven" inclusive. The basic soil is a sandy loam from a local greenhouse testing a PH 6.5. It has some enriching



in it, but over the years have found it is not sufficient. From that I have branched out making the seven different mixtures.

- |                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| 1. 4 parts loam | } | Feed with complete fertilizer in liquid form as this has no enriching in it, excepting a small amount in the loam. |
| 1 part peat     |   |  |
| 1 part sand.    |   |  |
| 2. 1 part loam  | } | Feed with complete fertilizer as in 1.   |
| 1 part peat     |   |  |
| 1 part sand.    |   |  |

Another mixture has a portion of bone meal, superphosphate and well rotted cow manure. We know that bone meal is available to the plant gradually and over a long period of time. The cow manure makes for healthy leaf growth and produces the chlorophyll or coloring in the leaves. The superphosphate is bud forming and is available to the plant at once. Another mixture may not contain any peat, etc.

Pot up plants of a similar size, giving them all comparable growing conditions but for the soil. Watch their growth above ground. In a few weeks examine the root growth. You will then know which is a failure and weed that one out. Continue to weed out and carry on until blooming. Then, see which one of two or three mixtures gives you the most satisfaction for size and color of bloom and the amount of bloom. Set up small experiments, and I am sure you will find it as interesting as I have. It's a lot of fun and one learns much from it. What might prove good for one would be bad in another location. Type of watering would also make a difference in the soil mixture to be used. Less peat is needed in automatic watering, and heavier soils should be treated differently from lighter soils. Heavier soils hold the moisture longer while sandy soils dry out much quicker. One needs to be a bit more careful in not overwatering with the heavier soils.

Now, just a word of caution in regard to earth worms. These are usually considered beneficial, especially in the garden. But, in a flower pot they are a real nuisance and can and do cause damage. Earth worms come from eggs, and although there may not be any evidence of them in soil brought in from the garden, purchased from your local greenhouse, or in rotted cow manure, they can hatch out in any of these listed, during the time it is standing waiting to be used. Dampness is conducive to keeping these worms alive, whereas, if earth or manure dries out, the worm will not live. I have just run across one example of this. A pail of rotted cow manure was purchased many weeks ago and is stored in the cellar, being used as it is needed. The manure is still moist and worms are found in it.

In case a worm finds its way into a pot, it will create a disturbance about the

roots and so far as the plant is concerned, there is evidence of wilt of the leaves. A friend who had this difficulty, felt sure a worm was in the pot of a Saintpaulia, as she noticed the worm castings in the saucer. Her way was to get rid of the worm by keeping her plant quite on the dry side until she felt sure the worm was dead. My preference is to take the plant out of its pot to be sure of what's going on underneath, for there can be other causes of wilt aside from the earth worm.

## HOUSEPLANTS

African Violets, table ferns, small palms, Ivies, Begonias, Cacti and succulents and other suitable plants for that window garden. In fertilizers we have Plant Marvel, Hyponex, Ferto Pots and bricks, N.N.O.R, insecticide and other accessories. Send for listing and tell us your needs. We may be able to help you find the articles you need. We have many plants not listed in our printed list for those visiting us here at the Nursery.

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# CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Elsie Freed

Once upon a time, there was one of God's newly erected churches in the city of our glorious Capitol that wanted very much to stand free of its mortgage shackles. Please, friends, pardon me for writing this in the form of a fairy tale - but . . . as we let the facts unravel may it remind you, too, of a bed time story and one that, as we drift off into dreamland, will create in us the desire to form a similar plan.

Adelaid Aldridge of Washington, a tender of the Church's "Plant Booth", sensed the necessity of featuring on this occasion - America's most popular house-plant, the African Violet. So, in ample time the lady commenced preparing and propagating.

During the summer of 1947, Adelaid visited two of her "Pen" acquaintances, Mary Parker of Knoxville who needs no further introduction and Mrs. Joseph Preston of Roanoke, Va. Finally, the Aldridge chariot was guided and came to a halt in front of 4409 River Road at the end of that particular violet-seeking jaunt, thus concluding many friendly little gibes made by the members of the family because of having to hold tiers of carefully packed boxes. (I wonder, if among us there are any who have not experienced this agony of discomfort?)

Now, many of you are wondering - I know - about the welfare of the little orphaned plants during this little vacation. Fortunately, they had behaved remarkably well, under the loving care rendered by Adelaid's many friends who gladly whisked them into their own homes and offered them shelter. In addition to these kind neighbors, was a Junior Hi lad who assumed the responsibility of 25 large blooming-size plants; and if diplomas could be granted for carefully following instructions, he could already be considered a graduate.

I want to commend Adelaid on her object for this festival, to present desirable "home-grown" and "disease free" Saintpaulias. Therefore, she took precautions that many of us become careless about. In purchasing plants, she never failed to keep them under her vigilant "watch", isolated, until convinced they were absolutely healthy. After which time, many of these plants were then loaned out to various church members in order to relieve the congestion at the Aldridge residence. However, these plants continued to grow under a weekly inspection by their "mommie". And, as an extra precaution, all earth and manure that was used was baked in an electric roaster.

Windows in Adelaid's home had long since been overflowing with violets, as was also her porch. In this latter location, bamboo curtains were used to protect the plants from the sun. Then . . . as soon as Jack Frost could be expected to leave his calling card - folding tables were erected and violets were re-arranged. However,

Adelaid is here with us now, so I'll step aside and have her continue with this narrative:

"Lamps were placed on these tables, providing all plants with 15-16 hours of light (2-25 watts were used in each lamp). But my loveliest plants were grown in a small 'cold frame' attached to the basement window. For this, I used Celloglass plus a few branches because of its Eastern and South-eastern exposure. At night, I turned on a 150 watt light and had the basement window open, and thus the air from it would warm the frame too. The outside I covered over each night, with a sleeping bag.

"It took three hours of continuous work daily to water, spray and transplant. Most of the pots were set in drip pans for colony watering. I am also a firm believer in dressing up your plant by painting the pot. The comparison is the same as when we are wearing our old work togs and then dress for a party. Even a non-blooming plant is attractive in a gaily colored container. In two year's time, I have painted 1000 flower pots!

"Violets generally, were given wonderful publicity, as our display was glamorous, and the 'show' free, attracting enthusiasts from five different states beside those in our District of Columbia. Mrs. Fonce Ford and Mrs. W. Duff Wilson, two well-known collectors, aided me in enlarging by contribution, until it included fifty-eight differently named violets, tho' probably there were some duplicates, as is frequently found in any large group. Small common varieties sold at the reasonable sum of 50¢; 75¢ - \$1.00 for rare ones; budding plants, \$1.00; the blooming size were tagged from \$1.25 - \$1.50; while "show" plants in four-inch pots brought \$2.50. At this event, I sold all my plants except some 275 seedlings and what leaves I had under propagation. The realized profit from African Violets alone amounted to \$512.00 while from another close-by table displaying mostly Hoyas the return was only \$23.00. I sold but "one of a kind" of the rare and unusual varieties to each person. This event took place on the Fourteenth of November, 1947, between the hours of 2 and 9 p.m. in the Mt. Pleasant Congregational Church, 1410 Columbia Road, N. W.

"Gift Orchid was our most popular violet, Red Spoon second, and Lavender Lady, third. Perhaps you may find this explanation regarding Gift Orchid interesting? I named it and am endeavoring to have it registered. It is of Neptune origin, tho' the flowers resemble Redland in color, and because of its having been a 'gift' thru three different exchanges, and then came to me for our sale, I feel that the name is an appropriate one."

Folks, you are now being switched back again to your news editor, and I, for one, wish to thank Mrs. Adelaid Aldridge for a most interesting and informative story. I know you must be a courageous person to have sponsored such an undertaking and you have set before us a marvelous lesson!





Pictures taken at the Luncheon Meeting at Cincinnati Club, Friday, April 29, 1949.



African Violet Society of America in Session at Dinner

The Society met in official session Friday evening to hear a distinguished speaker from Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Laurie gave a very informative address on "African Violet" magazine, and will be published in the September issue of the African Violet magazine. At the close of the dinner meeting a newly released colored movie was shown and the collection of several members were also shown.





Meeting 6:30 P.M. April 29, 1949 at The Cincinnati Club.

Dr. Alex Laurie, Head of the Floriculture Department of Ohio State University, "as I Know Them". A copy of the main points of his address has been given to the audience.

Twenty-two minutes of interesting activities in Cincinnati. Kodachrome slides from



Pictures taken at the Luncheon Meeting at the Cincinnati Club, Friday, April 29, 1942.





## The Homing Pigeon

Feasterville, Penna.

May 15, 1949

Dear Friends,

I think it very appropriate to give you a report on our progress in this, my final letter. From the little white egg laid by the Society, we hatched into squabs and are now recognized, as matured birds. We have 105 Pigeons in mid-air, delivering messages among 1050 members. There are 10 Directors' Units in circulation which help to keep our family ties unbroken.

In an endeavor to prevent the wheels of progress from slowing down (due to a large enrollment) I have appointed a staff of assistants. Gladys Canner: Rt. 1, Creek Rd., Herkimer, N. Y. is our Membership Chairman and will answer inquiries pertaining to joining.

Rosa Peters: 1726 E. Leonard Rd., R. R. 4, Grand Rapids 5, Mich. is our Circulating Agent - whose duty it is to obtain for the Units data on supplies for the Conductress Pigeon. Our motive is not to give a "plug" to manufacturers, but to report seemingly good products to our members. If anyone objects to paying postage on these special Pigeons semi-annually, his or her name may be removed from the Conductress roll, without its affecting their position in the flight of the regular bird, by contacting this office. When a person is a member in more than one Unit, an attempt will be made to have the Conductress Pigeon fly their way but once, tho' if it proves impractical because of the checking involved, please co-operate by simply regarding it as one small handicap against the many advantages received in belonging to more than one group.

Sorry to have strayed from "Staff" topic and I will continue. Violet Berry: 710 E. 6th St., Mt. Vernon, Ind. is our Talent Scout and will furnish an article in each flight of the Conductress Pigeon. Anyone desiring to submit material may contact Violet.

Soon Lillian Greer: 1822 Arapahoe St., Golden, Colorado, will assist with our correspondence as our mail box is overflowing. Your small courtesy of enclosing "return postage" when replies are expected, will be appreciated.

Eleanor May: 125 A. Ardmore Av., Ardmore, Pa. has been indispensable to me, too. Her task, about completed, is a couple of scrap books made with the lovely Christmas cards I received this past season from Pigeons. These greetings are too attractive to store away and soooo - soon they will be spreading more cheer in a ward of the Phila. Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children, an organization where kiddies of any are accepted.

Next in line is Neil Miller: Layton's Lake, Penns Grove, N. J. - who is our "Hobby Chairman" and assumes the responsibility of interesting hospitalized Veterans in our violet project. He has successfully contacted many co-workers, but more assistance is required in this wide field. Brown's of Newnan, Ga., Tinari Floral Gardens, Bethayres, Pa. and Martha Mears, Anderson, Ind. are but a few who have promised plant contributions. Helen Van Pelt Wilson and Mary Margaret Odom are both behind us with available books. Pigeon members (too numerous to list) are offering their aid in organizing chapters within the hospitals. But . . . there is yet another angle that needs consideration - an Incidental Expense Fund to pay express on these gifts so graciously given. And, since this "Hobby" is a protege of the Homing Pigeons it recently gave me great pleasure to send a \$25.00 check to Neil for a nest egg. May others, who wish to be represented in this worthy work (but have no surplus violets to give care to contribute money, there is no sum too large or too small, but that it will be gratefully accepted. I am confident that within the next few weeks, Neil will have made sufficient progress that we can expect a detailed account of their activities to appear in each ensuing issue of "The African Violet Magazine". To him and his wife, Mary - I am deeply indebted.

And, to the Staff in general - may I express my appreciation for your fine co-operation.

Now, since my allotted space has been used, in resigning I bid you all an affectionate farewell!

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Croasdale Freed

Conductress.

# PROPAGATION AND CARE OF SAINTPAULIAS

Eloise Dysart

The African Violet Society of America is welcoming many new members these days. Many of these probably are just beginning the fascinating hobby of growing Saintpaulias and would like some information regarding the propagation and care of this most popular house plant.

African violets are propagated from leaf cuttings, offshoots (or suckers) which sometime grow on the main trunk of a plant and which can be cut off and rooted, and from seeds.

The most popular of these for new growers is the leaf cutting method. Firm, healthy leaves that are not too old are best for rooting. They may be placed with the stem in water until a good root system is developed. At this point, they may be placed in soil or other growing medium, or they may be left in water until little plantlets appear. In this latter case, in transferring to pots, the small plants should be left above the soil. In either case, the parent leaf should be supported so that its weight will not uproot the new plants. Toothpicks with cotton on the end may be used for this purpose.

A good plan to use in water propagation is to cover the glass or jar with waxpaper, cutting holes for the petioles (stems). This supports the leaf and forestalls bruising. A hole should be cut in the paper (besides the ones in which the petioles are placed), to allow for a free circulation of air. Never allow the water to evaporate to a point where the end of the stem is out of water.

After placing in a growing medium (soil, peat moss and vermiculite, vermiculite alone, or sand), be sure the cotton supporting the parent leaf does not become wet during watering, as this may cause the leaf to rot before the baby plants are large enough to live alone. When the little plants are 1½ to 2 inches high, the parent leaf may be removed, cutting at the soil with a sharp knife or razor blade.

When there are two or more plantlets together, they may be divided at the time the parent leaf is removed, or may be allowed to grow a few weeks more before dividing. Those of you who are growing small plants for the first time may want to wait until they are a little larger and sturdier before dividing - - say, until the outside leaves are two to three inches high. Separate plants may be distinguished by the small leaves in the center or crown of each plant. To divide, enough of the soil should be removed to see where the plants are joined together. They should be cut apart with a razor blade or sharp knife, being careful to leave all the roots possible on each little plant.

Another way to divide is to cut down into the soil between the small plants, leaving them undisturbed for about a month, so they may develop their own

separate root systems, before being lifted out and potted separately.

If peat moss and vermiculite, or other rooting medium, is used to grow plants from leaf cuttings, the petiole should be cut to a length of not over 1½ inch and inserted in the rooting mixture for an inch or a little more or less. If the stem is buried too deep, the little plant will have too far to grow before it reaches the surface - - or it may never grow at all. This mixture should be kept damp (not soaking wet) with a water solution of a complete plant food, following printed directions for "Sand culture"; or plain water may be used, using the plant food at weekly intervals. However, the constant use of the food speeds the growth of the little plants. When plants grow to the proper height, the same procedure may be followed for dividing that is given above.

Plants that are fed regularly need not be repotted into large pots as they grow. A three inch pot is usually adequate for a mature plant. Many violet growers use a popular plant food which contains all essential nutriments, which is used once a week. Other plant foods for house plants have been used successfully by following directions on the package. Feedings should not be made oftener or of greater strength than directions specify, as the roots may be burned.

Woods dirt with some leaf mold is excellent soil to use. All soil should be sterilized to destroy harmful organisms. This may be done chemically, in an oven, or by pouring boiling water through the soil in a sieve. Manure in the bottom of the pot is very good, but should be sterilized before using. Sheep manure, which is already sterilized, can be bought in seed stores. About one teaspoon sheep manure to a three inch pot should be used - - in other size pots, in proportion to the size of the pot. If soil is heavy, peat moss and/or vermiculite or sand may be added to lighten it, making it possible for the roots to get the air which they need.

If suckers appear on the main stem or trunk of a Saintpaulia (in much the same way that suckers grow on tomato plants), they should not be left to grow, as they use the strength that should go into blooms, and also give the plant a ragged appearance. They should be worked loose gently, using a sharp pointed instrument. A nut pick is excellent for this. These suckers will form plants, if they are rooted by placing on marbles or gravel in a bowl containing water, or in any of the other rooting mediums mentioned above.

Saintpaulias require lots of light, and in most instances bloom better if they get some sun. An East or North exposure is considered by some growers to be ideal. If they are placed in a South or West window, they must be shielded from the



hot sun during the middle of the day in Winter and most of the day in Summer.

These plants like lots of humidity, and while they may grow in a dry atmosphere, they will not bloom without moist, fresh air.

African violets may be watered from below or from the top, but care should be taken to see that the sun does not shine on leaves that are wet, as they will be burned and ruined. They will love an occasional shower bath, washing the leaves gently under running water or spray, using tepid or slightly warm water. Be sure they dry in the shade.

Never water Saintpaulias with cold water. Always use tepid or slightly warm water. It has been said that more African violets have been drowned than dried up. A "happy medium" must be reached in watering. The soil should be neither soggy nor dry, but should be kept slightly damp. A light watering each day is better than saturating one day and leaving to dry out for two or three days. However, if the soil does become dry, a soaking from beneath is called for. Many people have good results by watering from below and removing the pot from the water when the top of the soil becomes moist. Others water lightly from the top each day.

Plastic or glazed pots hold moisture and need less watering than clay pots. However, if clay pots are used and they dry out too quickly, they either may be painted or wrapped with aluminum foil to prevent drying out of the pot and soil.

The aluminum foil also serves the purpose of protecting the leaves from the rough edge of the pot. Another remedy for the bruising of stems and leaves on the pot is to dip the top of the dry pot, before using, in melted paraffin.

People ask "How long does it take an African violet to develop from a leaf cutting to a blooming plant?" A broad answer is "from six months to a year and a half". However, with good care and under good growing conditions, most plants will bloom within eight to ten months.

Someone once told me - - "African violets are not hard to grow, but they do require lots of love to thrive!"

\*\*\*\*\*  
Pictures and a report of the  
show in Cincinnati, will be in  
the September issue — Editor  
\*\*\*\*\*

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## A SUGGESTION

Mabel Rodabough

There are so many small plants in  
my collection that I was at a loss to know  
what to use for saucers, until one day I  
went visiting. My hostess, who has three  
hundred cacti and succulents, had solved  
the problem. She was using old zinc can  
lids. One hard tap with the hammer and  
out comes the porcelain inset, making a  
nice deep saucer for the small pots.

I painted mine white to match the  
pots.

Just a word about paint. Several  
people told me they had tried painting pots  
white, but, in watering from the bottom,  
the paint came off around the lower part  
of the pots.

I use only plax paint, as it makes a  
finish just like enamel baked on - and it  
stays white.

# ANOTHER SAINTPAULIA AILMENT!

Eloise Dysart

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there were no pests for Saintpaulia growers to worry about — no insects, no nematodes or mites, no diseases, no fungi?

It would be much more pleasant to write and to read about healthy plants — to have no fear that our plants will be victims of an attack of some kind.

But alas! — this is impossible!

The next best thing is to know what to do in case our plants do fall prey to a pest. Therefore, I should like to pass on an experience I had last Summer, for the benefit of others who may have the same misfortune.

Early in the Summer, the center leaves of some of my Saintpaulias curled toward the center of the plant and had a whitish look. Some of the leaves merely curled, or were warped, without showing any white.

Having heard about cyclamen mite, I immediately suspected that. However, someone told me that this condition was caused by overwatering.

Upon returning from a two weeks' vacation, during which time they definitely had not been overwatered, I found that more plants were affected. Everyday one or two more curled up in the center. The center leaves of a few died.

The University of Tennessee Experiment Station examined plants thus affected and could find no cause for this condition. No insect was found, even under the microscope. While nothing was settled definitely, it is my opinion that this condition is caused by a fungus of some sort. It very definitely spreads from plant to plant, apparently through the air. I'm wondering if this can be the disease known as "Stunt".

Merely because of the fact that in our garden supplies we had End-o-pest, I started using this dust insecticide and fungicide.

Every time a plant showed signs of this condition, it was moved away from healthy plants. I put all affected plants under some shrubs on the North side of the house, watering them daily with a watering pot. Once a week they were dusted thoroughly with End-o-pest. The dust was also allowed to cover the top of the soil in the pots. There were finally about sixty plants so isolated.

At the end of six weeks, 38 plants were cured, and moved back into the house. Two weeks more an 15 or 16 more plants came back in. Two plants died during the outdoor sojourn.

It was now becoming too cold at night, so the remaining six or seven plants were moved in, but still isolated. These were the worst of the lot and had lost their centers. However, End-o-pest treatments were continued two or three weeks longer, at which time, those which had grown new centers were put back with healthy plants. Two or three were thrown away, because

they had lost so many leaves and were common varieties. If they had been rare, I would have kept them, for they had recovered and could have been salvaged.

Where the centers had died, there usually grew more than one "sucker" or "crown". All except the one nearest the center were cut out, leaving that one to cover the old scar and become the new center. The other suckers were rooted to make new plants.

Now, in March, (and indeed even much earlier), it is impossible to point out the plants that suffered. However, the growth of the plants was greatly retarded, and they have taken many more months to mature than their "brothers and sisters" who escaped the epidemic.

After using the End-o-pest, I found that others had tried the same remedy. Some, who had not been consistent in its use, or who gave up too soon, were unsuccessful.

Success depends upon isolation of sick plants and faithful and continued use of the fungicide.

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# "SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC"

Charlotte Hughes

The word Zodiac means little animals and the Zodiac is a belt 16 degrees wide extending right around the sky. In this belt are the apparent paths of the Sun and Moon and leading planets.

The marking off in the sky of the Zodiac and the division of the belt into twelve equal parts, each named after a leading constellation in it, was the beginning of astrology. No one can say who first marked out the Zodiac and divided and named its twelve parts, but it was probably the work of Babylonian Stargazers 2000 years before Jesus was born.

Just one of the theories is that names were suggested for these twelve "Zodiac Signs" by the Seasons and their agricultural operations. The Spring signs, the Rams, Bull and Twins are supposed to mark the bringing forth of young by the flocks and herds. The Crab marks the time when the Sun begins to go back toward the Equator, moving backward as the Crab was supposed to do. The Lion symbolizes the fierceness of the Summer Sun.

The Virgin, which is Flower Day, symbolizes the Gleaner of Corn - represents the Harvest, and shows a girl holding a flower in her hand. It is fun to make believe the right time is when the Sign is in the Flower. There is no harm done, and it may help us to keep our plants from wilting; and it keeps us at our work, planning to get just so much done every month of the year. Last July, I gave a friend 23 leaves, she lost only one leaf, some are in bloom and she has started them all over again, I always work in the Sign and on down until the "Sign" is leaving the feet. I use the Ladies' Birthday Almanac. It is very easy to read and is published by the Chattanooga Medicine Company, Chattanooga, Tenn.

The dates of the Zodiac for dividing, transplanting and setting of leaves for 1949:

Jan. 19th and 20th, and can be used until the sign reaches the feet to good advantage.

Feb. 15th and 16th, are the real Flower Days, good to use until the 2nd of March when the "Sign" is going out of the Feet.

Mar. 14th and 15th, on until 30th of March, Sign will be in the Feet.

Apr. 11th and 12th, good until 26th.

May 8th and 9th, good until 23rd.

June 5th and 6th, good until 20th.

July 2nd and 3rd, also 29th and 30th.

Aug. 25th and 26th, good until Sept. 9th.

Sept. 22nd and 23rd, good until Oct. 7th.

Oct. 19th and 20th, good until Nov. 3rd.

Nov. 16th and 17th, good to the 30th when the Sign will still be in the Feet.

Dec. 13th and 14th, good until the 29th.

I have found no suggestions for using the time between the Actual Flower Day and the Sign of the Fishes; that is my own idea and for me it works just the same, but the very next Sign falls in the Head, and it is not so good.

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## LET'S VISIT

Let's visit with Mrs. Martha Husted in Washington D. C. During the preliminary introductions, we are immediately attracted to Martha (perhaps we had previously written her many letters, so the visit is like renewing an acquaintance) and meet husband Bill, whose efficiency with the saw, hammer, and nails we soon find in evidence all about the house. If we are fortunate, their dog Ginger will take a fancy to us and show proof of it by finding one of her favorite pipes (in some corner) and, lying by our feet, punctuate all remarks as she goes to work with her gnawing.

Martha's plants are always lovely - clean and shiny; even though, during a bout with a gas leak, she resorted to a bit of deceit and downright fraud by pinching off the ends of her bloom stalks (just behind the calyx) and then replacing all her newly fallen blossoms. Or so we thought until she blithely removed one to show us the clever trick. "Why not?" she said. "The bloom does not really deteriorate for quite some time after it has been shed, so why not enjoy it on the plant where it belongs?"

We start the "viewing" upstairs in the back bedroom which has a north-east exposure and are immediately entranced at the vision of a window full of blooming

plants. Martha pulls out one of the shelves to get a plant for us to see and our interest momentarily goes in another direction. We are attracted to the shelves themselves; Bill's handiwork, of course. The windows in the Husted home are all of the casement type, which allows for quite a recess in the wall. In this recess is built a wooden framework with variously spaced grooves up the sides. Into these grooves are slid the glass shelves that hold many of the plants. Another nice feature, we notice, is that the grooves are arranged so that it is possible to raise, or lower, a shelf to allow room for plants in two, three or four inch pots. The shelves and framework are about six inches deep. Martha explains that this depth makes it possible to slide an entire shelf away from the window by a few inches on cold days or nights to eliminate the danger of frost from close contact with the glass. We live and we learn!

The collection, orderly and artistically displayed throughout the house - from the bedrooms to the basement, started about five years ago with the purchase of the unprecedented Blue Boy. A subsequent motor trip gave her opportunity to "ring door bells" throughout Maryland and Pennsylvania for one of the many splendid Pink Beauties blooming in the windows. The first sight of Blue Girl left her "fit to be tied" and another collector was born. Naturally the "girls" are among her favorites along with the "reds". Martha







tells us that she loves all the Blue Girls, regardless of the name that has been attached to them. Her Orchid Girl is one of the finest of this variety we will find anyplace, compact and perfectly shaped, with even crenation and quite large cream splotches at the base of the leaves. There was no hesitation when asked her favorite "red", for she immediately replied "Rosalie". Until recently her collection had embraced many of the old and newer varieties but her love for the "girls" and the "reds" - along with limited space - has started a trend toward specializing in that direction. When elaborating upon her "Rosalie" statement, Martha did add that this was her choice at the moment, but that she had in propagation several new "reds" and would like to reserve judgment until they had passed the "test" by coming into full bloom with maturity. Her latest addition is a seedling of Blue Girl and White Lady and has the usual fine crenate foliage, but the bloom is shaped like no other we have yet seen, on an African violet. The lobes are more deeply scalloped so as to give a definite semblance of petals and are curled backwards in a rather airy effect.

The tour through the house eventually ends in the basement, where leaves are always in the process of propagation. Leaves are always first placed in water for a few days, then Martha plants them in her "propagator" which contains nothing but vermiculite at a depth of about two inches and watered occasionally with a Vitamin B1 solution. (No fertilizers are used in the case.) This propagator has

one innovation that we had not come across previously. It is an oblong aquarium, 15 inches wide and 17 inches long. Bill has made a peaked top, instead of the usual sheet of glass, of wood covered with cello-glass. In the peak he has drilled a hole through which has been passed an electric cord and the socket inside the propagating case usually carries a 25 watt bulb for light and heat. A 40 watt bulb has been used, but we were cautioned that, in this case, there must be a much larger crack between the terrarium and the top than you would need with a bulb of lesser wattage. It is most important, Martha advises, that the case have a crack for the admittance of air, which is very essential. The location of the Husted propagator impresses the fact that "natural" light is not necessary for the rooting of African Violet leaves and the production of plantlets, because it is at least ten feet away from any window in their recreation room. The case has held, upon occasion, 72 leaves - nine rows containing eight leaves each. Size of the leaves to be propagated would change this number, as large leaves would naturally need more of an accommodation.

The leaf is removed when the clump of plantlets is quite small and transferred en masse into 2 inch pots containing a potting mixture of equal parts vermiculite and Hyper Humus, with about a teaspoon of Vitaloam - to the measure of a two inch pot. When large enough to handle, the small plants are pushed from the parent leaf with a toothpick and repotted separately into the same size pot and

## YOUR HINT HUNTER

Phyllis Ferrall  
Rt. 5, Box 551  
Battle Creek, Mich.

You are all very nice in your response to our Hint Column. Every letter I have received has had such enthusiasm and personal interest in it. Thanks again; keep your letters coming.

In our first Hint Hunter column was a suggestion for shocking plants into bloom in the refrigerator, leaving them in for not over four minutes. Mrs. Florence Foltz, of Lewistown, Pa., put a Blue Boy in her refrigerator and forgot it for twenty-nine minutes. The plant had previously not bloomed for one and a half years; a present writing, it is in bud. (The violet is surely unpredictable!)

Don't forget to give your plants fresh air. They need it.

Anyone interested in Hydroponics may obtain an interesting booklet from Chapman and Gilbert, 830 West Ivy, San Diego, Calif.

Dip flower pot rims in paraffin to prevent rim rot on petioles.

Equal parts of water and alcohol used in sprayer kills mealy bugs.

### LETS VISIT

Cont. from Page 29

mixture and the leaf used for another setting. The small pots are usually kept in trays at the basement windows under small fluorescent lights that burn throughout the night. However, upon occasion, glass trays or coffee tins have been used for the transplanting of leaf clumps, where they flourish abundantly without drainage. When the plants are ready to be transplanted into their three inch pots, garden soil, after it has been sterilized for one hour at a temperature of 250 degrees in an electric oven and stirred three times during the process, is added to the above mixture.

During the summer, many of the plants are transferred to a screened porch with the same north-east exposure, where they grow and bloom luxuriously. Throughout the year a fairly regular spraying program is kept, using Optox mainly, with an occasional change to NNOR.

We take leave of the Husteds, wending our way to another visit, with a glow in our eyes and a firm resolve to throw out all our own plants and start anew when we return home.

"The Visitors"

Mrs. Joan E. Copeland of Canada says: "I use about a gallon of water each time I water my violets, and as I work time is precious, and I spill many drops around. The other morning, in walked friend husband, a hot water bag slung over his shoulder, and by operating the little clamp on the end of the tube, he watered all my violets in about half the time it had taken me, with no drips at all!"

What would we do without our wonderful husbands!

From Mary Erlinger, Belleville, Ill. --  
Small tuna fish, salmon or pineapple cans make wonderful stands for pots, especially when you are crowded. One plant is placed on the table or shelf, while the one next to it is raised by the can, which is turned upside down. These can be painted or covered with colored oilcloth.

I have some window extensions, made of heavy gauge metal, which are ideal to set chick feeders on. This permits them to be far enough away from the glass to accommodate very large plants.

### Editors Note:

When writing to Mrs. Ferrall, please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your reply.

### AFRICAN VIOLETS

Large, healthy plants out of 3 inch pots. Blue Girl (Pat.), Lavender Lady, Pink Beauty (Pat.), White Lady (Pat.) ..... each \$1.50  
Blue Girl Supreme, Blushing Maiden, Dupont Blue, Dupont Lavender Pink, Pink Beauty Supreme (Pat.) ..... each \$2.50

Add 50¢ packing and postage on orders less than -5.00. We pay postage on all orders over \$5.00. Order today, send check or money order. (No C.O.D.) VIRDANS PLAST TONIC, \$1.00 postpaid. Makes Violets Bloom. (West of Miss. River \$1.25 postpaid).

VIRDANS FARMS BOX 123-L  
PHELPS, NEW YORK



## THE SECRETARY REPORTS

The third annual business meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order on April 30, 1949 at the Cincinnati Club, Race at 8th Street, Cincinnati, Ohio with 181 members present.

An operating budget for the calendar year was decided upon, and the Treasurer's report was accepted and authorized published in the magazine. Mr. Gottshall's report was as follows:

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD

April 30, 1948 to April 30, 1949

Balance in the Treasury, April 30, 1948	
Outstanding Check #26	\$2,475.15
Total	\$2,477.36
Income	
Membership Dues	\$8,151.66
Sale of Back Issues of Magazine	124.10
Sale of Advertising Space	143.00
Registration Fees 1948 Convention	155.17
Total Income	\$8,573.93
	\$11,051.29

### EXPENDITURES

1948 Convention	\$ 222.07
1949 Convention	35.10
Postage	463.90
Stationery and Supplies	423.99
Telephone and Telegraph	140.07
Miscellaneous	323.46
Publishing and Mailing Magazine	3,073.22
Total Expenditures	\$4,681.81
Balance in Treasury	
April 30, 1949	\$6,369.48

District Vice-Presidents for the year 1950 were introduced.

Region 1. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Mass., Conn., Rhode Island, and New York.  
Mrs. A. H. Farnham  
1803 Turnpike Street  
North Andover, Massachusetts.

Region 2. Penna., New Jersey, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, and Virginia.  
Mrs. R. J. Schadewald  
7 Lexington Ave.  
Havertown, Penna.

Region 3. North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Miss., and Tenn.  
Mrs. R. R. Blackburn  
404 Montlieu Ave  
High Point, N. C.

Region 4. Ky., Indiana, Mich., Ohio, and Illinois  
Mrs. Earl Mutchener  
606 Richmond Ave.  
Richmond, Ind.

Region 5. Wisconsin, Minn., South Dakota, and South Dakota.  
Mrs. A. H. Adams  
3611 Garfield Street  
Minneapolis, Minn.

Region 6. Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas.  
Mrs. Ferne Keller  
1223 East Oak Park Drive  
Des Moines, Iowa

Region 7. Arkansas, Louisiana, Okla., and Texas.  
Mrs. Banks McDowell  
2440 East 14th Place  
Tulsa 4. Okla.

Region 8. New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah.

Mrs. Clifford Darrow

917 Colorado Ave.

Glenwood Springs, Colo.

Region 9. Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho.

Mrs. P. H. Scully

510 Kearney Street

Laramie, Wyoming.

Region 10. Washington, Oregon, Nevada, and Calif.

Mrs. C. H. Harris

757 Athens Blvd.

Los Angeles 44, Calif.

Congratulations were extended by the President to Mrs. Arthur Radtke and her fine committee for the splendid way in which they had managed the many details of the convention. A special vote of thanks was given to Mrs. J. W. Freed for her generosity in making the attractive violet badges for the delegates to the Convention.

Mr. Boyce Edens, chairman of the Registration Committee, explained the purpose of his committee, and gave an instructive report on the work of classifying and registering new varieties of African Violets.

On recommendation of the Board of Directors the Society voted that the President appoint a committee for the re-writing of the By-Laws. Mrs. Arthur Radtke was appointed Chairman of this Committee. Also approved was a Committee on Awards.

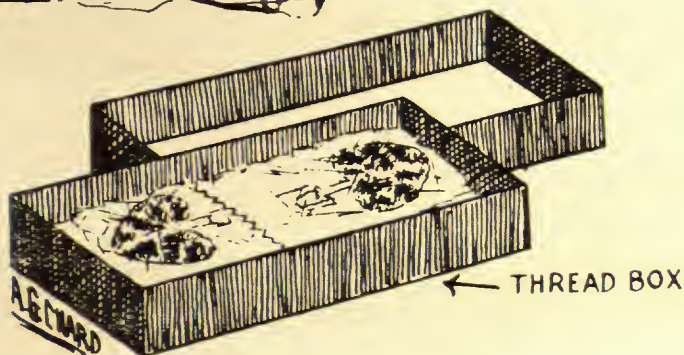
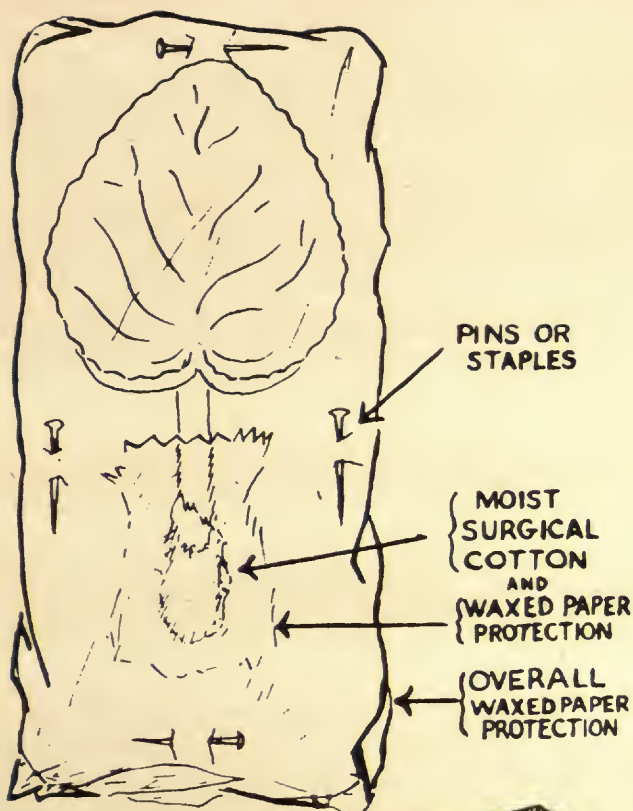
Mrs. Robert Wright announced that the Board of Directors had accepted Mrs. R. J. Schadewald's invitation to the Society to hold the 1950 convention in Philadelphia, Penna. It was unanimously accepted by those present.

Following this came the election of Officers. Officers chosen to take office January 1, 1950 are:

President - Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Vice-President - Mr. William Merkel, Second Vice-President - Mrs. C. H. Harris, Recording Sec. - Mrs. Martin Wangburg, Corresponding Sec. - Mr. Floyd Johnson, Treasurer - Mr. Warren Gottshall.



Standing- Mr. Gottshall, Merkel, Johnson,  
Seated- Mrs. Wangburg, Harris and Radtke.



## VIOLETS BY PARCEL POST

Ruth Sillers

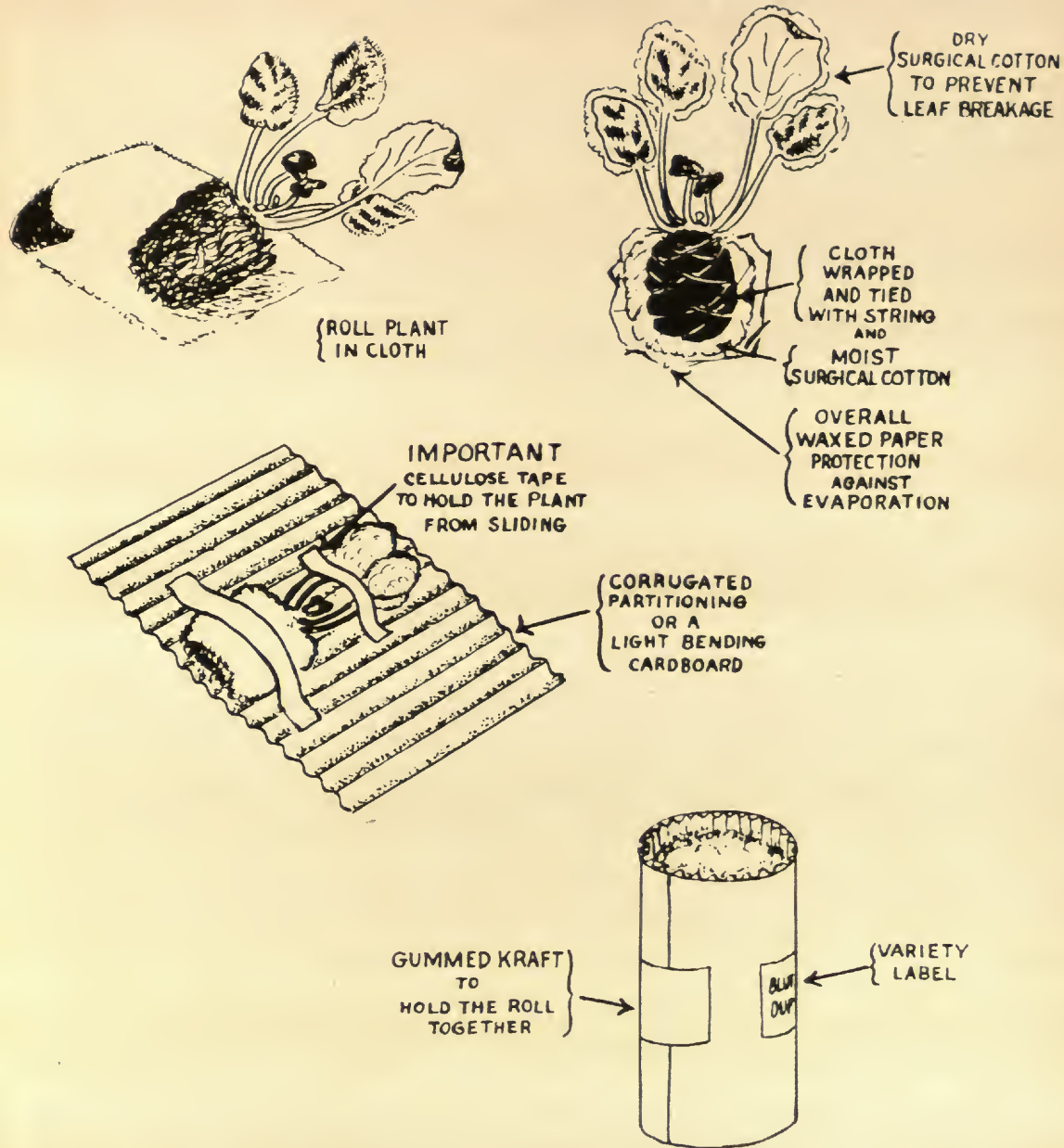
(Illustrations by Arthur Chard)

My violets are a source of great pleasure, and I look forward to each new one to add to my rapidly increasing collection. Our postman always receives a warm welcome at my door, and I can hardly wait to open the package and examine each new plant and leaf. Tho' **WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT**, when it has been poorly packed!

Most of us have our own special way in preparing parcels for the mail. Empty

sewing thread boxes, often obtainable at dry-good stores, make excellent containers for packing leaves. The end of the petiole should be wrapped in moist cotton; then a piece of waxed paper covering the cotton to hold in the moisture. The entire leaf and petiole should be wrapped in another piece of waxed paper and fastened securely with pins or staples. If you are fortunate enough to have Fermate, it is well to dust the end of the stem to protect it from disease.





When plants are to be shipped, they should be removed from their pots and the roots (with a ball of soil) wrapped in a piece of cloth held in place with thread or string. (Evergreens and small trees are transplanted in much the same way). A piece of wet cotton around the material will give sufficient moisture. Of course, waxed paper should then be wrapped around the cotton so as to prevent evaporation of the moisture. Dry cotton around the leaves will protect and keep them from being broken or bruised. The plant is then ready to be taped firmly with strips of cellulose to a piece of cardboard, pliable enough to roll and securely fasten. Cigar boxes are nice containers for shipping

small plants. After carefully placing each package in the box, add enough filler (excelsior, shredded paper, etc.) to keep the individual plants from moving. It is well to shake the box to make certain of no unfilled space.

Another matter of importance is to securely label each variety, whether a leaf or plant. If done with pencil it will be unaffected by moisture. It is also advisable to record on your parcel "Plants - Perishable" and take the precaution of mailing it "Special Handling". This small additional fee assures one a quicker and safer journey. Avoid shipping in extreme weather.

# GROWING 'EM OUTSIDE

Aletha Sturdivan

As growing flowers has always been my hobby, and, knowing how most of them respond to the fresh humid atmosphere, I thought I would try my luck at growing a few African violets outdoors.

After a winter's blooming - usually in inadequately ventilated homes - many of our plants seem to go into the doldrums. They take on a tired, wornout look and frequently stop putting out active growth and blooms. Some rejuvenating action on the collector's part is usually required. Most other houseplants are given new life by plunging them into the flower borders of our gardens; so, taking courage in hand, I ventured into the yard with a few African violets.

My "Jungle Greenhouse", as named by many visitors who have seen it, is merely the protection afforded by two huge barberry bushes, — planted about twenty-seven years ago when the house was built. These bushes are located, one about five feet from the North side of the house and the other about three feet from the West end of the house. The bushes have never been trimmed or thinned since our residence so they partially shut off the hot sun from this corner of the garden. However, when I decided upon this location for my violet experiment, I had to trim back the low hanging branches, as they were too thick to even place a pot beneath them.

Beneath the bushes the ground was soft and "composty" from rotting leaves and berries that had been collecting for years. Five or six small pots containing our older and more common varieties were pushed into this covering so they would not tip over too easily and also in an effort to keep the roots damp and cool. This was done on the 1st of July, as Iowa is colder than most southern states and does not

really warm up until about this time of the year. After about two weeks in this location and after a few good rains, the plants took on a decided "new look". This success prompted me to try a large Red Head that was supposedly resting after a long winter of blooms. The plant fairly burst into more and brighter blooms than it had ever had previously. Needless to say, it did not stay there for a visitor "simply had to have it".

I had had proof enough so, with the aid of a large tray, about 150 plants were carried out to the "jungle". Seedlings, still covered with glass, made the trip as did all the leaves in propagation. New babies seemed to appear after every rain - proving they need plenty of moisture, warmth, and very little bright light. Visitors, and prospective purchasers, looked utterly amazed when informed that the plants were all outside.

During a normal season, plants outside require very little extra watering and I gave them no extra feedings. Like everything else there are a few disadvantages; first, they get rather dirty from the rains splashing the soil on the foliage (I usually bring them inside during a good rain that washes them fresh and green); and secondly, a few little angle worms get into the pots, if no precautions are taken. I have since learned to set the pots on ashes, which has so far eliminated the worm invasion. Even after these obstacles, I knew I was well repaid, for their size and quantity could no longer be accommodated in the quarters provided in the house during the winter and an ad had to be run in the local paper to dispose of the surplus.

This year the plants will again be moved into their "jungle greenhouse" without apprehension.

## A BUSY HOUSEWIFE'S VIOLETS

I use a little bit of sand  
Vermiculite and such —  
Some very nice woods earth  
And bone meal, but not much!  
A little bit of phosphate too  
Is helpful I have found —  
Charcoal also, I've been told  
Will sweeten up the ground!  
My hours are busy, and so you see  
I haven't time my pots to boil  
I haven't time to fumigate  
To sift the sand, and bake the soil.  
Perhaps my violets know this,  
And in the midnight hours  
Conspire to overcome all foes  
And fill my home with flowers!

Juanita Empson.

## African Violets

Send for My Free Illustrated  
1949 Spring Catalog

It contains complete descriptions of all my varieties, including many of my own introductions. Several varieties are illustrated; catalog is packed with valuable information. Start this delightful hobby this season — write today!

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Quality Plants — Quality Packing

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African Violets for Beginners  
and Collectors



# NO MORE FLIES

Emaline Andricks

I have been using cow manure (purchased from a local seed store) in my soil mixture for the past eight months. My Violets seem to like it very much, for they have been nice to me, sending up buds anywhere from six to nine months from the time that I put the parent leaf to root. However, my troubles have come from the little black flies that hatch from it. I consulted a man at the insect spray department, and he told me to use one teaspoon nicotine sulphate to one pint of water and pour it around the roots. I soaked up the soil good with the solution. He also said to sterilize the soil I used next time with boiling water. The nicotine sulphate solution helped some, but it did not seem to get them all, so on some I used it twice at three week intervals. It did thin them down, but was kind of an expensive kill.

Next time I put the soil mixture into 4" & 6" pots and saturated it with boiling water. Now I told myself "no more flies." After a few days I potted up more violets only to find, in perhaps two weeks time, those pots hatching flies. I was told that to paint the pots on the outside with "Pestroy" would help. Not having that, I

used "Flit". With a couple of applications of this, if they seem too persistent, and patience, they hatch and crawl out, fly around and die eventually. I find dozens of them in the lamp bowls and around the pots dead.

I sprayed with N. N. O. R. This, I find, is a most effective spray for violets, but it did leave brown spots on the undersides of the foliage, where evidently these little flies had nibbled and the spray turned the places brown. This spoiled the foliage, so that was out. I have laid moth crystals on the soil; that has very little effect.

I have heard that if the manure is well rotted, the flies will not hatch. Some say even cow manure tea hatches the flies; someone else said they baked it, and the eggs still hatched.

I have never lost any plants from this, but I surely would like to find the answer to their certain doom. If I didn't have a very patient, and good natured family, surely they would scold about mama's many wee visitors flitting by their ears, yes, and even occasionally lighting in the butter dish. Can anyone help?

---

## COLOR

Helen Van Pelt Wilson

(Published thru the courtesy of M. Barrows & Co., Inc., publishers of Miss Wilson's revised edition of "African Violets",)

The color of saintpaulias is a not too constant quality. In fact, it seems to me after we decide saintpaulias have a range from deep, intense purples through blue-violets, wine-reds, and pink-violets to pink, blush, and white that we have about told the color story. To give each variety a symbol and place it exactly on a finely graded chart is hardly possible or worthwhile. I have tried this method with several charts and at different seasons. It was a frustrating business. The saintpaulia which today is Red Violet 4, may

after a week of cloudy weather be nearer Red Violet 6! The variety which in one soil is blue under more alkaline conditions may be orchid.

Perhaps it is best to think of color as a relative characteristic - Viking will always be deeper than Blue Eyes, but the degree of variance may not be constant. In view of saintpaulia variability, I have removed the color symbols originally used in this book and am describing colors only with words. My color charting is for tentative guidance only, although it was developed from an actual sequence of flowers picked from plants in full bloom and arranged on a table according to gradation of color.

---

## HELEN POCHUREK SPECIALIZING IN AFRICAN VIOLETS

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Garfield Heights 5, Ohio

Introducing Tunia's Cleveland Indian - a dark red, named in honor of the Cleveland Champion Baseball team. Also Amazons in Amethyst, Blushing Maiden, Sailor Boy, Norseman, White Lady. Merkel's Giant Blue, Low Cluster Blue, Mrs. Boles and Tunia's Big Boy at .50 each or 7 for \$3.00. Periwinkle, Blue Knight, Brilliant, Old Lace, Moire and Brown Dot at .35 each. Add .50 for postage and packing on orders of less than \$3.00. Send stamped envelope for complete list of leaves and plants. Leaves of Tunia's Cleveland Indian 75¢ each.

# POTTING, POTS, AND POTTING SOIL

Arthur G. Chard

## PROPER TIME TO REPOT

The proper time to repot would seem to some to depend a great deal upon locality, i.e., the growers of African violets in the South would feel free to repot at any time during the year while those in the North would believe that potting should be confined to Spring and early Summer. Personally, I believe that the proper time to repot is designated by necessity instead of by season. By repotting I mean the term as defined by Helen Van Pelt Wilson in her book "The African Violet" in which she writes "Repotting - which may involve replacement of worn-out soil with a fresh mixture, the improvement of drainage conditions, and even some cutting back of the roots", as differing from "Shifting - the moving of a plant to the next, larger-sized container with a little more soil but the least possible disturbance".

Shifting can be accomplished at any time. The one main thing to remember in this procedure is to thoroughly moisten the soil in which the plant is growing beforehand so that it can be pushed out of the pot without any of it falling away from the roots. With this precaution even plants in bloom may be "shifted" without any damage to the blooms or set-back to the plant.

Repotting should be done as soon as necessary and requires only a few precautions. Naturally, a repotted plant is going to experience some shock, but the ultimate benefit to the plant will soon remedy this condition and in the long run helps more than a little, besides being the savior of a plant that might otherwise be lost. Plants that have been flowering faithfully all Winter may, by Spring or early Summer, begin to grow up so high at the crown that they look rather clumsy, or topheavy, and every time the pot is moved the plant does the "wiggles". As a treatment, follow, more or less, the rules set down for other plants that have become straggly or potbound. Turn over the pot and with your left hand over the "lip" catch the plant and ball of soil as you gently push it out from the bottom with a pencil, or any other object that will go into the drainage hole, with your right hand. Remove as much of the soil as possible from the roots by working it between your fingers. (This will cause less bruising of the roots than knocking it against something or shaking it, as the entire crown may be torn away from the roots with this procedure). Then, with a clean knife or scissors, cut away a good portion of the roots so that the plant when repotted can be set lower into the new pot so that the long stem below the crown can be set beneath the potting mixture. Balance your plant next by removing some of the older, out-side leaves so that the plant will be in proportion to the remaining roots. In this way the roots will not have quite as much work to do

until they become acclimated and new growth begins. Then repot with a fresh soil mixture but do not fill the pot too full - rather leave room for a later addition of a nicely fertilized "top-dressing". This is really a "shock treatment", for it will soon shock the plant into renewed growth and prolong the life of the plant, perhaps indefinitely.

The procedure for plants suffering from crown-rot cannot, perhaps, be covered under "repotting" but it is worth giving a thought at this time. Crown-rot is the result we all experience sooner or later when we become too lavish with the watering pot. This condition may become so exaggerated that the crown can eventually be lifted off from the top of the potting mixture. In the case of rot, be sure to remove all of the rotted portions, even if it becomes necessary to cut away practically all of the crown but a few leaves. If any of the "brown" is left the rot will spread. Get a fresh pot, or thoroughly clean the old one, and over the drainage hole place some "crocking" and above this some sphagnum moss and fill with vermiculite. The moss will prevent the mica from leaving the pot when it is set aside to drain. The base of the newly operated on crown may be dipped into "Rootone", but this is not absolutely necessary. When the pot is filled, gently push the plant, or what remains of it, into the vermiculite; and, if small enough, a tumbler or glass jar can be placed over the top. Set it aside until the next day, or at least a few hours, before watering to permit the "scar" to heal. The pot should then be placed in water and allowed to remain until completely moistened. Do not rewater until the vermiculite seems dry and do not expose to too strong a light but keep rather back from the window. To test whether the vermiculite needs watering insert the point of a pencil. If you can push it about like so much dry cornmeal, it needs water, but, if particles of the mica adhere to the pencil, the addition of water is not necessary. A plant in soil this dry would surely perish, but it must be remembered that moisture as well as air is confined within the cells of the vermiculite itself. If glass is placed over the plant, it should be removed occasionally to admit fresh air and to cut down on the accumulating humidity.

## SIZE OF POTS

The proper size of pots is rather a delicate subject as there are many and diversified opinions on the topic. Personally I like a pot in keeping with the proportions of the plant. Some state that Saintpaulias do not need to be pot-bound to bloom but rather like plenty of foot room. Perhaps this is correct but the fact remains that the same size plant in a small pot will bloom before the one in a large pot. True, it may also make suckers,



but I am rather loathe to search about in a huge pot to find the plant. Too much pot detracts from the beauty of any plant. The preference is for a 3 or 4 inch pot, but if a plant looks exceptionally rugged and has reached a spread of 8 or 9 inches it can be put into a 5 or 6 inch standard pot - though the azalea pots are perhaps better as they are less hard to water. However, for a person with a large collection, it is preferable to keep the plant sizes on a more restricted scale. This can be done by starting new plants and either selling or giving away the old plant; or, by trimming and repotting the originals to keep them at a smaller size. In this case, smaller pots have a tendency to keep many varieties from maturing to their full extent.

## POTTING SOIL

The potting "soil" for rooting leaves and/or suckers in my case is vermiculite, and I find that the best leaves for rooting are the smaller leaves toward the center of the plant . . . but not so small as to have no petiole. A leaf which has a petiole perhaps 1½ inches long is about ideal. I also find that leaves which have nobules (that would naturally form roots if one were to cover soil over that portion) root quickest. Break the leaf off at the crown (it is not necessary to cut it again) and put it into dry vermiculite at a depth of about ¾ of an inch and then place a glass over it. Use anything up to a 3 or 4 inch pot and fill as above noted for plants to be rerooted that have suffered from crown-rot. Use dry vermiculite as the cutting is more easily inserted before the mica has been watered. The pot can be filled about ¾ full and when the plants come up given regular weekly waterings with a liquid fertilizer. Usually, after several waterings, the vermiculite loses that coarse sawdust-like look and begins to appear more light and airy. The plantlets are permitted to grow undisturbed for quite a few weeks and then removed, all but the largest which is NEVER removed but given regular feedings with the liquid fertilizer. After a time, I put on a little top soil which is a mixture of peat, vermiculite, dirt and some cow manure. The loose root runs in the vermiculite, with a top feeding once in awhile, which seems to be ideal for my violets.

A potting soil containing woods soil has been found to be unsatisfactory here in the East as it generally contains a sort of fungus. This fungus may be the cause of root-rot or the excess acidity may be to blame. This soil should never be used unless a fungicide has first been added. Neither should finely sifted soil be used as it "packs" in the pot preventing natural and luxurious growth of the roots. Many of us have received plants from greenhouses apparently growing in pure "mud" or heavy clay and they look beautiful but we soon find that in our homes they deteriorate and seem to "shrink". It should be remembered that in the greenhouse the moisture content of the soil is kept at the same degree of saturation - without water-logging - as is the humidity of the air. This saturation keeps the soil lighter than

if it were allowed to become dry. Should it dry it takes on an arid, baked look and the addition of water then only tends to make it "heavy", as our homes do not have the ideal and controlled conditions of the greenhouse. Keep your own potting mixtures as light as possible by the addition of peat, vermiculite and possibly sand for drainage. The mixture should be able to hold a lot of moisture without becoming "soggy". When soil is "sifted", the particles are broken down too finely and will pack too close and hard in the pot. A coarser soil is much more preferable to free movement and development of the roots, BUT, remember never to permit excessive dryness of any soil. Should this happen to such an extent that the leaves droop limply over the sides of the pot you may find that they never straighten up and will eventually rot because of being in constant contact with the moisture in the pot itself and secreted from the sides and "lip".

Why not a growing medium, or at least, base, of vermiculite? I know of plants that have never been in anything but vermiculite and have grown to large proportions and carried many and large blooms. Neither had they been given more nutriment than plants grown in a potting mixture and regularly fed. Perhaps the future will prove the benefits of hydroponics in African violets. Certainly vermiculite is cleaner and disease free and the addition of bone meal and regular feedings of liquid fertilizers may be the blessing of every Saintpaulia grower. The excess salts deposited by commercial hydroponics can easily be washed from the vermiculite by occasional "rinsing" from above. The raising of violets in vermiculite alone is still in the experimental stage but may yet prove the answer to all our problems by being the least expensive and most satisfactory.

Not all back issues of the magazine are now in print.

Requests for these must be made on penny post cards and you will be notified which ones are available.

Do not send money until you are notified.

— Editor

## CLUB NEWS

### Ocala, Florida Chapter

The Ocala, Florida African Violet club, which was organized about a year ago, hold their meeting on the first Wednesday after the first Tuesday of the month.

This group presently has a membership of 15, with the following officers:

President, Mrs. Fred E. Landt, Sr.  
Vice-Pres., Mrs. B. F. Shealy  
Secretary, Mrs. C. F. O'Berry  
Treas., Mrs. John D. Williams, Sr.

### Springfield Missouri Chapter

The Springfield Mo. Chapter of the African Violet Society held its annual election of officers on November 16, 1948.

The new officers were installed by Mrs. J. D. Armstrong and were as follows:

President, Mrs. W. H. McBride  
Vice-Pres., Miss Esther Bustrin  
Secretary, Mrs. Benton Linder  
Treasurer, Mrs. M. J. Hammond  
Corres. Sec'y., Mrs. Charles Denham

We are proud of the enthusiasm and interest of our Society, and of our membership, which now totals 77. The outstanding project for 1949 thus far was a display of Violets at the Community Hobby Show.

### Chattanooga Chapter

A window garden at the Pine Breeze Sanatorium, the main project of the Chattanooga African Violet Society, was started last March from plants donated by members. The garden was arranged by Mrs. M. D. Chapman, assisted by Mrs. Horace Humphreys, Sr., Mrs. W. C. Taylor, and the nurses at the sanatorium.

At present the society, of which Mrs. W. W. Cox is president, is engaged in a classification course. A plant naming contest is held at the close of each meeting and the winner receives a flowering African Violet plant as a reward.

The local society, which now has a membership of 90, was organized on June 11, 1947, by Mrs. Patric J. Crowe for the purpose of the culture and propagation of the plants.

The society has sponsored three outstanding shows and made a day's pilgrimage to homes of African Violet collectors in the city. An al fresco meeting was held at the home of Mayor and Mrs. Hugh P. Wasson on Missionary Ridge.

The first annual spring luncheon was held a year ago when Mrs. Robert Wright of Knoxville, editor of the national society's publication and elective president of the African Violet Society of America, was guest speaker. The first anniversary tea was held last June at Mrs. Crowe's home on Missionary Ridge.

### South Bay Chapter #3

The South Bay Chapter #3, which includes Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach and Manhattan Beach, California, was organized on March 22, 1949, with 6 charter members.

The meeting was held in the Redondo Beach Community Hall with Mrs. Clarissa Harris, region #10 director, and Mrs. Wanda Jones, President of the Los Angeles #1 Chapter, present for installation of the new officers.

Officers elected and installed are:

President, Mrs. Della Mollenkopf  
Vice-Pres. Program Chrm.,  
Mrs. Minetta Holman  
Secretary, Mrs. Margaret Fenn  
Treasurer, Mrs. Margaret Johnson  
Plant Chrm., Mrs. Kate Corubleth

After the installation, Mrs. Harris gave an interesting and informative talk and answered many questions. Refreshments were then served.

### African Violets for the Veterans

The Long Beach Saintpaulia Society has undertaken the voluntary project of creating interest in African Violets at the Long Beach Navy Hospital. The Society hopes to present a blooming plant to each veteran who is interested. The first 25 plants were given to the boys in the tumor and heart wards.

The Society hopes the answers to many questions will be found in the literature donated which consists of a subscription to the African Violet Magazine; an African Violet Handbook by Mary Margaret Odom; and an illustrated book, African Violets, by Helen Van Pelt Wilson.

A Hobby Class will be conducted for the veterans who are interested.

Harvey Cox, a disabled Veteran of World War 1, who is an African Violet Hobbyist who has contributed generously to this project, was presented a life membership in the Long Beach Saintpaulia Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute plants to this project, contact Mrs. L. D. Thalheimer, 1831 Mc Kenzie St., Long Beach 5, Calif., president of the Long Beach Chapter.

### Alhambra Branch of the Violet Society

The Alhambra Community Chapter of the African Violet Society, Inc., held its initial meeting at the Story Park Clubhouse on February 24, 1949. 68 interested growers attended this meeting; 17 joined the National Society at this time.

The new officers are:

President, Mrs. J. Ernest Mackey  
1st Vice-Pres., Mrs. Mary Walters  
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. Margaret Schoengost

Secretary, Mrs. Bessie Skadion  
Treasurer, Mrs. Marion Reubel

Mrs. Clarissa Harris, regional director of region #10, gave a very informative talk on Violets and an open discussion followed.



## Missouri Valley African Violet Society..

A group of Violet enthusiasts from Atchison, Kansas, and St. Joseph, Missouri met March 30, 1949 at the Pennant Cafeteria in St. Joseph for a 6 o'clock dinner, and organized The Missouri Valley African Violet Society. Mrs. Emma Pawleson of St. Joseph presided as chairman of the meeting.

The following officers were elected:  
President, Mrs. Bird Barnes  
Vice-Pres., Mrs. F. M. Richardson  
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. Bernard E. Ulrich  
Secretary, Mrs. Harvey Hayes  
Treasurer, Mrs. Luther O'Neill  
2nd Treasurer, Mr. Bernard E. Ulrich  
Corresp. Sect. Mrs. Milton Bum-bacher

There was a round table discussion, questions and answers of problems pertaining to the care and propagation of African Violets. Future meetings will be held at the Pennant Cafeteria in St. Joseph on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

## Lewistown, Pennsylvania Society

The 2nd Monday of the month has been chosen as meeting night for the newly organized chapter in Lewistown, Pa.

The following officers were elected:  
President, Mrs. Homer C. Foltz  
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Leslie Heck  
Secy. & Treas., Mrs. James Helm-bold

Although this group is small in size, their enthusiasm is great. Their first meeting time was spent in the planting of seed which they intend to watch grow, report and discuss at future meetings.

## Violet Society of Humboldt, Tenn.

The African Violet Society of Humboldt, Tenn., was organized in September, 1948. Mrs. John E. Hooper, founder of the Memphis Society, and Mrs. W. C. Hope, President, assisted in the formation of this organization. Five ladies attended and the following officers were elected:

President, Mrs. John R. Boyd, Jr.  
1st Vice-Pres., Mrs. J. V. Butler  
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. E. L. Phillips  
Secretary, Mrs. F. D. Hamilton  
Treasurer, Mrs. Vernon Carter

Since that time, 18 members have enrolled, a charter of organization drawn up and several needed chairmen named. Regular monthly meetings are held and a bulletin published on the culture of the Violet.

## Battle Creek Exhibit

The Battle Creek, Michigan, African Violet Society plans a Violet Show to be held on April 21. The show will be open to the general public and many of the newer varieties will be on display. Professor Mildred and Evan Roberts of the Michigan State College will be the judges.

Officers of the group are:

President, Phyllis Ferrall  
Vice-Pres., Mable Wilkes  
Secretary, Elsie Walton  
Treasurer, Dorothy Haffenden  
Corres. Secy., Edith Thies  
Publicity, Mable Bailey

## Richmond, Virginia Club

From Richmond, Virginia, comes word of the newly organized Richmond African Violet Society, with 38 members.

The following are officers and committee chairman:

President, Mrs. Gibson C. Phillips  
1st Vice-Pres., Mrs. Alva Tate  
2nd V.-Pres., Mr. Frank Brunton  
Recording Sect. Mrs. R. Mc I. Frazer  
Corres. Sect., Mrs. G. H. Frank  
Treasurer, Mrs. G. H. Reid  
Program, Mrs. Milton Eike  
Publicity, Mrs. F. H. Norvell  
Membership, Mrs. John Pangola  
Hospitality, Mrs. D. W. Ferguson  
Telephone, Mrs. G.L. Mac Kay

## Minneapolis Violet Society

January 4, 1949, was the first meeting date for the 12 members of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, African Violet Club. With addition of 4 members of the Minnesota Garden Flower Society, committees were selected and plans made for a non-competitive Violet show to be held in April.

Officers for this club are:

President, Mrs. A. G. Alden  
Secy. & Treas., Mrs. A. H. Adams

## AFRICAN VIOLET SEED

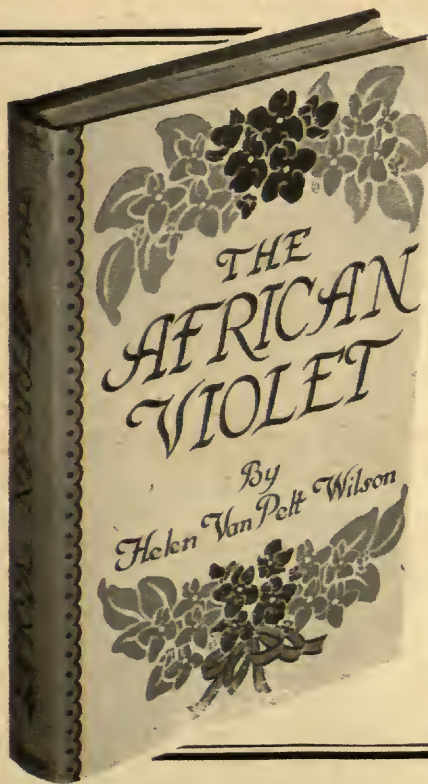
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